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### **Grammar, language use, and linguistic variation** (Saturday, 12.11.2011 – 09:00)

In our talk, we will stress the importance of empirical data analysis to the advance of syntactic theory. On the one hand, empirical data can be and has been used to verify or falsify theoretical assumptions. On the other hand, empirical data can force us to come up with more adequate theoretical explanations for unexpected distributional facts. With such a procedure, we may be able to solve a basic problem found in much current syntactic research. As HAIDER (2007: 389) writes:

Generative Grammar is not free of post-modern extravagances that praise an extravagant idea simply because of its intriguing and novel intricacies as if novelty and extravagance by itself would guarantee empirical appropriateness. In arts this may suffice, in science it does not. Contemporary papers too often enjoy a naive verificationist style and seem to completely waive the need of independent evidence for non-evident assumptions. The rigorous call for testable and successfully tested independent evidence is likely to disturb many playful approaches to syntax and guide the field eventually into the direction of a serious science.

In a first step, we will exemplify the importance of solid empirical grounding in two case studies. These studies analyze the conditions under which rare and exceptional forms surface. Having detailed these conditions, we can then ask what insights they provide for grammatical analysis. This aim coincides with RIJKHOFF'S (2010: 223) comment: "Rare linguistic features should play in [sic] important role in grammatical theory, if only because a theory that can account for both common and unusual grammatical phenomena is superior to a theory that can only handle common linguistic properties." The phenomenon of rare data also raises fundamental methodological questions regarding linguistic evidence. In a second step, we will then analyze the relation between acceptability and frequency with regard to rare constructions.

Our first case study is about Differential Object Marking (DOM) in Spanish focusing on inanimate objects. We will start from the well-known observation that in some languages only a subset of direct objects is morphologically marked. According to most theories, DOM is cross-linguistically determined by individuation features of the object NP, such as animacy and definiteness, i.e. object marking is sensitive to the animacy scale, the definiteness scale, or a combination thereof (cf. AISEN 2003, BOSSONG 1985 among many others). As far as Spanish is concerned, animacy seems to be the most important factor. Generally, definite objects are not marked with the prepositional marker *a* ('to') unless the referent is human or at least animate (cf. e.g., *He visto a la niña/(a) la gata/\*a la casa*; 'I have seen the girl/the cat/the house'). However, there are exceptions to this restriction, i.e. sometimes object marking is possible or even required when the object is inanimate (cf. WEISSENRIEDER 1991; GARCÍA GARCÍA 2010). In our corpus analysis of 48,112 transitive sentences, this is the case with only 559 tokens (1.2%). These rare, but nevertheless systematic exceptions challenge the traditional generalizations about DOM. We will offer an alternative hypothesis based on the notion of agentivity and postulate that object marking of inanimate objects is compulsory

when the subject does not outrank the object in terms of agentivity (cf. e.g., *La moral no sustituye \*(a) la comprensión histórica*; ‘Morality cannot take the place of historical comprehension’). Discussing the relation between animacy and agentivity, we will suggest that agentivity is the central notion for the explanation of DOM with both animate and inanimate direct objects.

The second rare phenomena we will discuss can be found in a data set of 14,000 Mennonite Low German (MLG) clauses, which result from the oral translation of 46 English, Spanish, or Portuguese stimulus sentences into MLG. This translation was done by 313 North and South American Mennonites. In this data set exists a rather peculiar variant in embedded clauses with one verbal element:

stimulus	If he does his homework, he can have some ice-cream
translation	Wann der <b>dät</b> <sub>VI</sub> SINE ARBEIT <sub>ObjNP</sub> , dann kann der some ice-cream eten
gloss	When he does his homework, then can he some ice-cream eat

The unmarked position for finite verbs in embedded clauses in MLG would be the final position. As this is not always the case, we have to ask why these verbs sometimes seem to surface in second position (cf. also KAUFMANN 2007: 193-198). One possible answer would be to assume that an object shift to the right has taken place; another one that the informants have re-analyzed these clauses as embedded main clauses with the finite verb in second position. Both of these assumptions, however, are not compatible with the empirical facts. Therefore, another approach has to be taken. Grouping the informants according to their preferences with regard to verb clusters in embedded clauses with two verbal elements, it can be shown that the distribution of the variant in question can be explained by the informants’ propensity for verb projection raising and scrambling, two phenomena frequently mentioned as constitutive for the surface shape of clause-final verb clusters (cf., e.g., DEN BESTEN and BROEKHUIS quoted in HAEGEMAN 1994: 512). This means that although the variant in question definitely does not constitute a verb cluster and although the object NP surfaces in last position (unlike in clause-final verb clusters), the structural derivations for all these variants are comparable. Or in other words, the informants tend to apply verb projection raising and scrambling *across-the-board*.

Finally, we will present experimental findings on the relation between acceptability and frequency, in order to discuss the significance of rare frequencies of occurrence for the grammatical system. Seven different well-formed interrogative variants of French wh-questions (wh-in-situ, wh-fronted, *est-ce que* question, etc.) were presented to 102 French native speakers in a gradient acceptability judgment test. The same speakers had been previously interviewed in order to build a corpus of spontaneous speech. The results show that three of the seven variants essentially do not occur in spontaneous speech, although they are rated as acceptable. Acceptability seems to be a necessary but not a sufficient condition for the realization of a form in language use – which is in line with the findings of a previous study (ADLI 2011). Rarity does not mean incompatibility with the grammatical system. The study of rare phenomena either requires very large corpora or acceptability judgments. They need to be taken seriously in spite of the technical challenges of obtaining solid empirical data on them.

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## **Building a system through input and interaction in language development**

(Friday, 11.11.2011 – 11:15)

From a usage-based perspective on language, there is no dichotomy of system versus use: The system is based on language use, and children acquire the system by generalizing over usage events. Over the past 20 years, this has been demonstrated with naturalistic L1 acquisition corpus data, in controlled experiments, and in computational modelling of real or hypothetical input data. The aim of this research is twofold: First, to determine the degree of overlap and deviation from the input structure in order to find out whether the input provides the information necessary to abstract the grammatical system of the language to be acquired. The second aim is to pinpoint the learning mechanisms employed to extract the information about the language system. Despite ongoing debates on the nature of the underlying linguistic representations, it is by now widely accepted that early language development proceeds in a piecemeal, lexically specific fashion. To stimulate the debate on language learnability, Jeff Elman showed how a Single Recurrent Network can find structure in time and learn from partial information regarding the target language (Elman, 1990). Later, the research question was expanded to structures which supposedly cannot be learnt from positive evidence: Can a network be trained to correctly produce complex sentences without having encountered those sentences? Elman demonstrated that structural dependencies in sentences like *Is the boy who is smoking crazy?* can be learnt on the basis of simpler structures that provide information about the structures of the building blocks. The network derived indirect positive evidence from these simpler structures (Elman, 1993, 2003) by exploiting the form-function relationships between different constructions (construction conspiracy; Morris, Cottrell, & Elman, 2000). I will present data on the acquisition of the German passive (Abbot-Smith & Behrens, 2006) to show how children make use of such formal or functional links between such constructions. Such links can both facilitate and inhibit the acquisition of related construction: If there is formal and functional overlap, scaffolding from related construction can facilitate acquisition as the learning problem is becoming smaller. However, the existence of functionally related but formally different construction can also inhibit the acquisition of a particular structure because there is a related and preferred construction (e.g., modal infinitives vs. future tense). In terms of learning mechanisms, the usage-based account requires a strong memory component: children must store usage events in order to be able to generalize over them. The size and nature of verbal memory is a new topic in developmental research (Bannard & Matthews, 2008; Gurevich, Johnson, & Goldberg, 2010; Matthews & Bannard, 2010). In the second part of my presentation, I will argue that the plausibility of such an approach is increased if we look at storage and generalization of linguistic structure in the true context of their use, i.e. including the actual discourse situations they occur in as suggested (Küntay & Slobin, 2002). There is a growing body of evidence that early language development is firmly grounded in the interaction of the child in and with the real world (DeLoache, 2004; Roy, 2009, 2011). If the notion of language use is expanded such that contextual grounding is taken into account as well as the role of scaffolding in discourse, the

child has many more cues available to break into the language system than assumed in models that assume autonomy of representation.

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**Looking for structure-dependence, category-sensitive processes, and long-distance dependencies in usage** (Saturday, 12.11.2011 – 15:15)

Newmeyer's compelling defense of grammar versus usage provides the reader with a wide ranging and rich set of ideas as well as multiple sources of potential debate. Instead of agreeing or disagreeing, I would like to explore some of these ideas using what I know from the fields of Conversation Analysis and Variationist Sociolinguistics. I do not seek to falsify any particular hypothesis. However, I do seek, at the very least, to problematize such statements (p. 695), as "there is a world of difference between what a grammar is and what we do." I begin with an issue indicated in the title of Newmeyer's work, or what I would call a binary approach to the organization of argument. If we claim that grammar is grammar and usage is usage, we have set up an either/or binary relationship between the two with the attendant implication that the boundary between the two is actually recognizable. See Wasow (2009:269) for a related claim that "[...] the location of the competence/performance boundary is so hard to pin down." Of course binarism has long organized research and argument beginning with Saussure's distinction of *langue* and *parole*. More recently, consider Hauser, Chomsky, and Fitch (2002) on the nature of the language faculty as being narrow (FLN) vs. broad (FLB) with the key claim that the FLN is exclusively characterized by recursion. In response, Jackendoff (2011) asks if recursion can be found in other domains of cognition such as vision. If so, because recursion would not be unique to language per se, the key proposal about the nature of the FLN in Hauser, et al. is called into question or falsified, though the possible existence of a FLN and FLB is not. I will pursue a strategy analogous to that of Jackendoff, but considerably less ambitious. My point of departure emerges from Newmeyer's critique (p. 687) of early connectionist models of grammar where he asserted that they are "hopeless at capturing even the most basic aspects of grammar, such as long-distance dependencies, category-sensitive processes, structure-dependence, and so on." I start with a question:

Might some of these basic aspects of grammar have parallels (not exact replicas) in usage or, more accurately, discourse above the level of the sentence produced as we speak?

As I pursue this question, I operate on the basis of an assumption. If phonology may differ from and yet share certain features with syntax and thereby be a partner in grammar, then if usage differs from yet shares certain features of grammar, these shared features will give us cause to, at the very least, rethink the binary distinction between them and to propose something other than binarism. Key to this would be the discovery of systematicity and structure in usage. I take both systematicity and structure as evidence of knowledge. I will start with structure dependence, move to category-sensitive processes, and then long-distance dependencies. And as I do, yes, I am aware of Newmeyer's (p. 692) complaint about Lakoff and Johnson when he wrote, "Lakoff and Johnson's mistake in their book *Philosophy in the flesh* (Lakoff & Johnson 1999) was to assume that any generalization about usage is necessarily a matter for grammar to handle." When discussing structure dependence, I will

rely on Conversation Analysis. Elsewhere, I will draw on Variationist Sociolinguistics for exploration of category-sensitive processes and long-distance dependencies.

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## **The no man's land between syntax and sociolinguistics: Idiolectal variability**

(Saturday, 12.11.2011 – 14:30)

Recent years have seen a growing interest in the interdisciplinary field of dialectology, sociolinguistics and formal syntax in the domain of microvariation; that is, syntactic variation between closely related dialects in geographical and/or social space. This interdisciplinary field provides an opportunity to perform theoretical research on the basis of solid empirical studies. The discussion in this talk will explore the hypothesis that there can be a quantitative and socially realistic approach to syntactic variation under which this variation is constrained by a substantive theory of UG (cf. Wilson & Henry 1998). Following such an approach, we should expect usage patterns to reflect grammatical organization (Meechan and Foley 1995: 82; Kroch 1998; Pintzuk 1995; Cornips and Corrigan 2005, 2006), as well as social/stylistic and processing effects. The goal of this paper is to draw on such research in order to explore issues related to idiolectal variability i.e. individual speaker variation revealed by grammaticality and acceptability judgments, and spontaneous speech concerning among others word order in verbal clusters, negative concord, inalienable possessive dative constructions and reflexive middles in Dutch dialects. Both standard and non-standard systems of adult speakers are not static but are participating in ongoing processes of change as a result of social, political, cultural and economic influences. Even in those increasingly rare communities in which supralocal models are absent, face-to-face interactions are often polylectal and idiolectal variation emerges. I'll focus on so-called intermediate speech repertoires (Auer 2005) in the southern part of The Netherlands and Flanders in Belgium. These repertoires are presumably the most wide-spread in Europe today and are characterized by hybrid forms between standard variety and (base) dialects. This speech repertoire reveals syntactic differences along a continuum to such an extent that it blurs the distinction between the local dialect and the standard variety. I will discuss that in this speech repertoire (i) clear-cut judgments are not attainable since all variants heard in the community e.g. standard, dialect and intermediate variants are considered as acceptable and (ii) one of the variants of the syntactic variable always concern the standard variant i.e. the most prestigious one.

### ***Case-studies***

For example, two small case studies convincingly show how easily speakers switch between the (base) dialect and the standard variety in an oral task. The first case-study to be discussed is that clear-cut judgments are not attainable. One of the locations involved in the Syntactic Atlas of the Dutch Dialects (SAND) was Nieuwenhagen (Landgraaf) a very small 'rural' village. In the local dialect of Nieuwenhagen proper names are obligatorily preceded by the definite determiner *et* or *der* 'the' depending whether the proper name refers to a female or male, respectively. The presence of the definite determiner preceding a proper name is fully ungrammatical in standard Dutch. The first session between the standard Dutch speaking fieldworker and the local 'assistant-interviewer' translating standard Dutch into his own dialect shows that the 'assistant-interviewer' may or may not use the definite article resulting



in *der Wim* and  $\emptyset$  *Els*, respectively in his local dialect. Note that the definite determiner precedes the subject DP whereas it is absent in front of the object DP:

**1<sup>st</sup> session (dialect – standard)**

(1) *Der Wim* dach dat ich  $\emptyset$  *Els* e boek han will geve  
 det Wim thought that I Els a book have will give  
 ‘Wim thought I wanted to give a book to Els.’

A second session in which the ‘assistant-interviewer’ exclusively interviews the other dialect speaker in the local dialect, the latter utters the definite article both with the subject and object DP as ‘required’ in the dialect:

**2<sup>nd</sup> session (dialect – dialect)**

(2) *Der Wim* menet dat ich *et Els* e boek probeerd ha kado te geve.  
 ‘Wim thought I tried to give a present to Els.’

These deviations from the input by the same subject provide conclusive evidence that both types of constructions are a reflection of the grammar(s) of this speaker.

A second case study focuses on individual variability in word orders in three-verb clusters that were elicited by an indirect relative judgment task in the SAND-project. This task required 370 subjects throughout The Netherlands and Flanders to rank orders within several types of three-verb clusters from most to least acceptable on a five-point scale (representing \*, ?\*, ??, ?, ok). Table 1 provides the results for subjects accepting several orders regardless the numerical value (yes = 1–5). Clearly, the MOD-AUX-V cluster allows more idiolectal variation than the MOD-MOD-V<sub>inf</sub> cluster. If we establish a threshold of 10%, the former allows up to three orders per subject whereas the latter allows two orders per subject. One of the orders accepted always concern the standard Dutch order:

**Table 1:** The amount of orders accepted by subjects regardless the numerical value

Type cluster	0 orders	1 orders	2 orders	3 orders	4 orders	5 orders	6 orders	orders per speaker
MOD-AUX-V	17 = 4,6 %	87 = <b>24,6%</b>	139 = <b>39,4%</b>	97 = <b>27,5%</b>	26 = 7,4%	2 = 0,6%	2 = 0,6%	2,2 n=370
MOD-MOD-V	39 = 10,5%	233 = <b>70,4%</b>	71 = <b>21,5%</b>	23 = 6,9%	3 = 0,9%	1 = 0,3%	0 = 0%	1,4 n=370

In this talk, I’ll address questions whether grammatical theory can predict the differential vulnerability of diverse structures emerging in idiolectal variation as in the two case-studies and whether there can be general rules for how grammar-internal properties may affect the distribution of syntactic variants within the speech community.

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**The grammar of use and the use of grammar: Without society there is no language**

(Friday, 11.11.2011 – 10:00)

HUBERT HAIDER (University of Salzburg / Hubert.Haider@sbg.ac.at)

***Cognitive evolution ↔ Why language systems are society-based and usage-friendly adaptations*** (Friday, 11.11.2011 – 14:30)

The short history of linguistics narrowly replicates the overcome intellectual hurdles of historical phases of *evolutionary biology* and (cognitive) *psychology*: In Wundt's days, *introspection* was seen as the data highway for theory building in psychology. Today, psychology is strongly experiment-based. Linguistics still relies on speculation and introspection to a large extent. Darwin realized already in 1871 (*The descent of man and selection in relation to sex*) that evolution is not substance-bound and that the development of language is parallel to biological evolution in terms of adaptation as a consequence of variation and selection. Nevertheless, linguistics has not reached firm scientific grounds yet. Strictly *Lamarckian* schools (functionalist; form follows function) compete with *structuralist* schools (nativists). The functionalist schools ignore the strong system boundaries, and the structural schools are diligently ignoring the adaptive properties in language 'design'. These must not be ignored since they are fully compatible with a structuralist view. Adaptation is merely a consequence of cognitive evolution in the variation+selection manner of Darwinian evolution. I shall argue that linguistics will not become eligible as a scientific enterprise before linguists have fully accepted the scientific standards for theory construction and falsification that every mature science has accepted. These standards are experiment-based. Furthermore, the structure of language systems is not fully understood, if one has not appreciated the *adaptive* qualities as a result of cognitive evolution. Evolution presupposes '**society**' and '**usage**' as the joint selection 'biotope' for competing variants. The present '**systems**' are the present winners of a cognitive selection process whose by-product is adaptation. Linguistic functionalism and structuralism are but two incomplete pictures of the very same reality.

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### **Autonomy revisited: A sociological point of view** (Friday, 11.11.2011 – 15:15)

The postulate of the autonomy of syntax was the major issue in the debate between Generative Grammar and the Functionalist Approach. Although Generativism never denied the referential, pragmatic, social and cognitive functions of linguistic expressions, it has focused on the idea that grammatical structures (categories, rules) form an independent neuro-cognitive mechanism that follows its own ratio. Functionalism, on the other hand, tends to maximize the impact of the external principles on the grammatical structures mentioned above. In a certain manner, both approaches fail to account for the extraordinary empirical variety of linguistic structures in a typological or in a diachronic perspective, its gradual transitions and the evident arbitrariness underlying this wealth of structures. This paper starts out from a usage based approach where grammar is seen as an outcome of communicative activity, just like any other system emerging from social interaction. Following the assumptions of sociological functionalism, any emerging system tends to develop and to increase characteristics of self-containedness, where the originally functional motivations gradually give way to structures that satisfy the needs of the system as such, thus leading, at least virtually, to an increasing autonomy of the system. Applied to the process of emerging grammar, the autonomy of structures appears to be a necessary consequence of its emergent character. At the same time, this allows for the great wealth and arbitrariness of empirically attested structures. Thus, albeit starting from a resolutely functionalist base, this paper defends that autonomy of structures not only is existent, but that it has to be considered as an essential feature of grammar, not as a cognitive a priori, as in Generative Grammar, but as the virtual end-point of a process of self-organization that is typical for systems of social interaction.

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## **Variation and optionality in syntax: Two case studies on Brazilian Portuguese**

(Friday, 11.11.2011 – 12:00)

Diachronic studies on Brazilian Portuguese (BP) have shown some major changes in its syntax since the beginning of the 19th century, a scenario where variation and optionality are expected to occur. We will discuss two cases where variation, or optionality, seems to be involved: a) the variation between the null subject and the overt pronominal subject in ‘controlled’ embedded contexts, and b) the ‘optionality’ of *wh*-movement. In both cases there is an increase of frequency in one of the alternatives (overt pronominals in the first case and *wh-in-situ* in the second one) and this variation could reflect “a discrete change in the grammars of some individuals before the new parameter setting affects the grammars of others” (Lightfoot 1991: 162). My claim, however, is that such optionality can be present in the grammars of single individuals, a fact that poses problems in a Minimalist framework, where variation/optionality is precluded in grammatical derivations. For the variation between the null and the pronominal subject, I will claim that the lost null subject is currently acquired in late acquisition, through schooling, being absent in the child’s core grammar. Variation, in this case, is present in the literate adult’s I-language, who code-switches between the weak pronoun acquired in his/her core-grammar, and the null logophoric subject, acquired through literacy. As for the *wh*-questions, I analyze BP as always having obligatory last resort *wh*-movement of a short type (Miyagawa 2001). The *wh-in-situ* cases are fake *in-situ* constructions, with the *wh*-element undergoing a short movement to a VP-adjacent FocP, (Belletti 2004), and the apparent fronted cases are reduced cleft constructions, with the *wh*-element moving to a copula-adjacent FocP, with the subsequent erasure of the copula. There is no real optionality between the two constructions in this case as the two constructions depend on a different numeration.

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**What we've learned from diachronic syntax** (Saturday, 12.11.2011 – 11:00)

There's data and there's data. A person's I-language generates data consisting of structures and corresponding sentences. That I-language develops in response to primary linguistic data, simple elements of E-language that occur robustly in childhood experience. Syntacticians have been remarkably reticent in saying which primary data trigger which elements of I-language, in large part because they have frequently assumed an input matching model evaluating the overall success of a grammar in generating a given corpus. That model raises huge feasibility issues and makes no sense for an explanation of syntactic change through acquisition. Work in diachronic syntax, on the other hand, linked to a cue-based model of acquisition, has led to ideas about what triggers particular elements of I-language, some of them quite surprising. Recent work based on partially parsed corpora of historical texts has provided a way of distinguishing variation stemming from co-existing I-languages, which involves oscillation between two fixed points, as opposed to the endemic and more chaotic variation within amorphous E-language, enabling better linkages between primary data and properties of I-languages. All of this indicates that data and variation, central themes of this meeting, come in various forms and need to be understood and evaluated differently.



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**Language variation and the autonomy of grammar** (Friday, 11.11.2011 – 09:15)

The paper takes as its point of departure the truth of the following propositions: (a) A comprehensive theory of language must account for variation; (b) Much of everyday variability in speech is systematic, showing both social and linguistic regularities; (c) Language users are highly sensitive to frequencies – a fact that has left its mark on the design of grammars; (d) An overreliance on introspective data is fraught with dangers. Given these starting points, the paper asks whether the Autonomy of Grammar (AG) is a motivated hypothesis. AG is defined as follows: A speaker's knowledge of language includes a structural system composed of formal principles relating sound and meaning. These principles, and the elements to which they apply, are discrete entities. This structural system can be affected over time by the probabilities of occurrence of particular grammatical forms and by other aspects of language use. However, the system itself does not directly represent probabilities or other aspects of language use. The conclusion is 'Yes, the point of departure is fully compatible with AG'.

I take as a given two methodological points: First, nothing should be attributed to the grammar which is adequately explained by extragrammatical principles; and, second, nothing should be attributed to the grammar which could not conceivably be 'known' by the speaker of the language. I demonstrate that much of the (AG-rejecting) variationist literature runs afoul of these two points. For example, some variationists have argued that syntactic subcategorization frames should be 'tagged' with the probability that they might be called upon by the speaker in language use. I demonstrate that such probabilities derive from extralinguistic factors. To take another example, some variationists have argued that grammatical rules should be formulated with different probabilities attached to different realizations of the rule (i.e., they posit what are called 'variable rules'). Taking some concrete examples (*that*-deletion, the ordering of post-verbal elements, *t/d* deletion, and others), I argue that economy dictates a 'modular' approach, where the rules themselves are discrete and categorical, while the observed variation is a function of systems interacting with the grammar. I conclude with some remarks on the nature of a modular theory of language.

## Persistence and analogy in the history of auxiliary selection in Spanish

(Saturday, 12.11.2011 – 11:45)

Recent studies in usage-based linguistics emphasise the impact of persistence / syntactic priming effects on language production (e.g., Gries 2005; Szmrecsanyi 2005; 2006). Speakers are assumed to be “creatures of habit” (Szmrecsanyi 2005) in that the appearance of a particular syntactic structure often triggers (“primes”) the usage of this structure in the subsequent discourse. Szmrecsanyi (2005) shows that both formal ( $\beta$ -persistence) and functional ( $\alpha$ -persistence) aspects of grammatical patterns can prime the usage of this grammatical pattern. As will be pointed out below, especially  $\alpha$ -persistence presupposes that the functions of two grammatical patterns are perceived as analogous. The present paper evaluates the relationship of persistence to the retention of certain grammatical patterns in language history. In particular, it identifies the importance of persistence effects in the development of perfect auxiliary selection in Spanish. As illustrated in the following example, in Old Spanish both *aver* (‘have’) and *ser* (‘be’) could be used to auxiliary verbs like *quedar* (‘to stay’):

- (1) **E asy andudo souertyendo a todas quantas mugeres de**  
*and so go- subvert-PROG to all how much women of*  
*PST.PFV.3SG*
- altos omnes ouo en greçia otrosy a algunos que**  
*noble men have-PST.PFV.3SG in Greece. also to some that*
- AUJAN QUEDADO en greçia en tal manera que todas**  
*have- stay- in Greece in such manner that all*  
*PST.IPFV.3PL PTCP.M.SG*
- las mas delas grandes mugeres de greçia se leuuntaron**  
*the most of.the noble women of Greece themselves rise-PST.PFV.3PL*
- contra sus maridos con algunos delos que enla tierra**  
*against their husbands with some of.those that in.the country*
- ERAN QUEDADOS** (*Sumas de la historia troyana de Leomarte, 1350*)  
*be- stay- PTCP.M.PL*  
*PST.IPFV.3PL PTCP.M.PL*

*‘And so he went about subverting all of the women of noble men that there were in Greece, and also some who had stayed in Greece, so that all of the noble women of Greece rose against their husbands with some of those who had stayed in the country’*

As is well known, the *ser* + PP construction declined in usage frequency until disappearing in the 17<sup>th</sup> century. Using mixed-effects regression models (Pinheiro, Bates et al. 2009), quantitative evidence is raised that supports the hypothesis that, on the one hand;  $\beta$ -persistence effects played a decisive role in the conservation of *ser*-selection after 1450. On the other hand, it will be demonstrated that  $\alpha$ -persistence effects for *ser* + PP did not remain stable between 1250 and 1650. While *ser* + PP is  $\alpha$ -primed by *ser* + PP constructions in Medieval Spanish, this pattern is reversed in Classical Spanish: *ser* + PP is increasingly primed by the competing *aver* + PP construction. This change in the persistence patterns of *ser* + PP can be explained by taking into account the development of the *ser* + PP

construction before its disappearance. While Old Spanish *ser* + PP can be characterised as a resultative construction (Rodríguez Molina 2006; Rosemeyer submitted), during Classical Spanish it appears to have been reanalysed as a perfect construction in analogy to the perfect with *aver* + PP. Since this development is mirrored by the change in persistence patterns in the usage of *ser* + PP, this paper proposes an intimate relationship between  $\alpha$ -persistence and speakers' perception of grammatical patterns as analogous.

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**Syntactization, analogy, and the distinction between proximate and ultimate causations** (Saturday, 12.11.2011 – 17:15)

In this programmatic paper I will propose three hypotheses concerning the formal side, the functional side and the diachronic development of syntactic structure:

(i) There is autonomy of syntax. A purely functionalist (or constructionist) view on syntax fails to capture those parts of syntactic structure which are not 'meaningful' in any way but must be understood as constraints on purely structural well-formedness instead.

(ii) Autonomous syntactic structure is the result of language use and diachronic language development.

(iii) The cognitive mechanism by which autonomous syntactic structure is diachronically implemented is analogy.

The argument will be based on an in-depth empirical case study on prepositional dative marking (PDM) in Upper German dialects. In several dialects a dative DP can be introduced by a semantically empty prepositional marker. The example demonstrates how new variants come into play, spread over larger dialect areas, and are implemented in different ways into the respective systems of grammar. Whereas in some dialects PDM is an optional variant whose use can easily be motivated on the basis of extrasyntactic functional principles (such as e.g. iconicity), other dialects have analogically extended prepositional dative marking to all structurally related contexts such that the dative marker must be analyzed as an expletive element here, triggered by a particular syntactic environment and irrespective of any functional properties of the dative phrase. In other words: There are dialects where PDM must be motivated extrasyntactically and others where an extrasyntactic motivation is not only impossible but also unnecessary. The basic insights of the proposed approach are valid for other phenomena such as verb-second, dummy elements (e.g. do-periphrasis or expletives) and subjecthood as well. In conclusion, I will argue that the question whether formal or functional explanations in syntax are more appropriate is actually misleading. Referring to the distinction between proximate and ultimate causations of evolutionary biology I will propose that both approaches are 'explanatory', but at different levels, and therefore compatible with one another. In the future, linguistic theory must acknowledge the relevance of both structure-driven and function-driven traits of syntax without overstating the explanatory power of one side at the expense of the other, and it must give an account of their mutual relationship (and the limitations thereof).

## 'Reanalysis' is gradual, constituent structure is gradient

(Saturday, 12.11.2011 – 16:30)

Reanalysis--change in constituent structure--may describe the difference between the string *estar* 'be (located)' + Verb-*ndo* (gerund) in Old and present-day Spanish (1). The combination of *estar* and Verb-*ndo* began as a particular instance of a general gerund construction in which finite forms of spatial verbs (including *ir* 'go', *andar* 'go around', *quedar* 'stand still') took a gerund complement (1a). Today the sequence is described as a Progressive periphrastic form in which *estar* is an auxiliary and the gerund is the main verb (1b). Evidence for change in constituency--from two to a single unit-- is the steady decline of intervening elements (1a) and the increase in placement of object clitic pronouns before the entire periphrasis (1b) (Bybee & Torres Cacoulos 2009).

(1) [locative-postural-movement]<sub>verb</sub> + [Verb-*ndo* (gerund)]<sub>complement</sub> > [*Estar* + Verb-*ndo*]<sub>verb Progressive</sub>

- (1) a. *que estan a las muelas molie-ndo*  
REL be.PRS.3PL to the mills mill-GER  
'who are at the mills milling' (13<sup>th</sup> c., GEI, fol. 155v)
- b. *se está ponie-ndo el sol*  
REFL.3SG be.PRS.3SG set-GER the sun  
'the sun is setting' (19<sup>th</sup> c., Paloma, Act III, Scene I)

Reanalysis is the outcome of gradual processes resulting in loss of analyzability. Bybee (2010: ch. 3, ch. 8) explains that analyzability is lost because chunks become increasingly autonomous from their erstwhile component parts, as they become used more frequently and more in novel functions. In this presentation, I adduce evidence for gradualness in the grammaticalization of *estar* + Verb-*ndo* from quantitative patterns of variation between this expression and the older morphosyntactic expression with which it alternates, the simple Present. We observe this variation, in the domain of present temporal reference, beginning in the earliest texts (2).

- (2) a. *Está devanea-ndo entre sueños.*  
be.PRS.3SG rave-GER between dreams  
'He **is raving** (PROG) in his sleep' (15<sup>th</sup> c., Celestina, Act VIII)
- b. *Hijo, déxa=la dezir, que devanea;*  
Son, let.IMP=her talk that rave.PRS.3SG  
'Son, let her talk, she **is raving** (PRS)' (15<sup>th</sup> c., Celestina, Act IX)

As Labov (1994:26-27) has put it, "whatever the proportion may be of invariant to variable linguistic rules, the study of change intersects only tangentially with the pursuit of invariance." Cumulative variationist research over the last five decades has confronted the inherent variability of grammatical systems. The theoretical notion of the variationist framework is the *linguistic variable*, a set of *variants* between which speakers alternate in expressing a grammatical function. I use multivariate analysis to track the configuration of linguistic factors conditioning variation between the Spanish Progressive and the simple Present, in 13<sup>th</sup>-15<sup>th</sup>, 17<sup>th</sup>, and 19<sup>th</sup> century texts. The comparison of independent analyses across these three time periods provides evidence for gradualness in semantic and structural

change. The Progressive begins as a construction with more locative meaning, as shown by the early favoring effect of co-occurring locatives. The direction of this co-occurring locative effect is retained over time, but the magnitude weakens relative to aspectual constraints: *estar* + Verb-*ndo* is increasingly disfavored in extended duration (habitual) contexts (and also less likely to be chosen with stative verbs and in negative polarity and interrogative contexts). Thus, increases in frequency of a new construction are accompanied by changes in conditioning. It appears, then, that in grammaticalization at least, rates increase differentially across linguistic contexts (cf. Poplack & Malvar 2007). An aspectual opposition arises as, in the course of speakers' recurrent choices between the variant expressions (Sankoff 1988), the expressions develop aspectual differentiation within the domain of present temporal reference.

- (3) *están cocidas con sus garbanzos, cebollas y tocino,*  
 be.PRS.3PL cook.PTCP.F.3PL with their garbanzos onion and bacon  
*y la hora de ahora están dicie-ndo: "¡comé=me! ¡coméme!"*  
 and the hour of now be.PRS.3PL say-GER eat.IMP=me  
 'They are cooked with their garbanzos, onions and bacon and now are saying "eat me, eat me!'"  
 (17<sup>th</sup> c., Quijote II, LIX)

A test of the increasing cohesion--'chunking'--of *estar* + Verb-*ndo* is a structural priming effect. Priming (persistence), where the use of a certain structure in one utterance functions as a prime on a subsequent utterance, such that that same structure is repeated, is robust in psycholinguistic experiments (e.g., Bock 1986) and in natural speech (e.g. Cameron 1994, Scherre & Naro 1991, Szmrecsanyi 2006). We find that *estar* + Verb-*ndo* is favored when the preceding clause has a different (not Progressive) *estar* construction (including locative, predicate adjective, resultative) (3). This indicates a greater degree of analyzability of the sequence in the 13<sup>th</sup>-15<sup>th</sup> and 17<sup>th</sup> c. than in the 19<sup>th</sup> c. data, where this priming effect no longer obtains.

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