

# CoLiDi 2014

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## Abstracts

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Department of  
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## Barðdal 2014

### Jóhanna Barðdal. Reconstructing argument structure, word order and focus for Proto-Indo-European\*

*Ghent University*

In contrast to the received consensus in the historical-comparative linguistic community, it is argued here that syntactic reconstruction is both a plausible and a feasible enterprise. We illustrate this with an investigation of the syntactic behavior of the reconstructed lexical item *\*wai* 'woe' across five subbranches of Indo-European, i.e. Indo-Iranian, Italic, Baltic, Slavic and Germanic. The adverbial interjection *\*wai* 'woe' is found instantiating three different constructions in the preserved material, here labeled:

- the Bare Exclamative Construction
- the Dative Exclamative Construction
- the Predicative Construction.

We will compare different diachronic scenarios and argue for one particular scenario based on the most likely relative chronology of the three constructions, given the function, valency, frequency, and word order properties of these constructions attested in the daughters. As our data suggest that the Predicative Construction is indeed archaic in the Indo-European languages, we propose that the Dative Exclamative Construction has developed from a focalized variant of the Predicative Construction, used in exclamatory context, since 'woe' is the quintessential candidate for being focused in situations of adversity. On the basis of the comparative evidence, all three constructions must be reconstructed for Proto-Indo-European, as the hypothesized development has most likely occurred during prehistoric times. Thus, our conclusion is that not only is syntactic reconstruction both plausible and feasible, but also that networks of constructions may be reconstructed.

\*Based on joint work with Valgerður Bjarnadóttir, Serena Danesi, Tonya Kim Dewey, Thórhallur Eythórsson, Chiara Fedriani & Thomas Smitherman



Hans C. Boas. Semantic and syntactic change in language contact: A constructional analysis of Texas German *mit* ('with')

University of Texas at Austin

Recent years have seen an expansion of constructional approaches into a broad range of linguistic fields. However, relatively few analyses have focused on issues of language contact from a constructional perspective (see Pietsch 2010 and Höder 2012 for exceptions).

To overcome this dearth of constructional research on language contact, this paper offers a constructional analysis of semantic and syntactic change of the preposition *mit* ('with') in Texas German (TXG), a new-world dialect spoken in central Texas for more than 150 years (Boas 2009). Part one of the paper gives a brief overview of the history of Texas German, including its contact with English. Part two presents the corpora that form the basis for this paper, namely Gilbert's (1972) *Linguistic Atlas of Texas German*, which shows the distribution of multiple features of TXG, and the Texas German Dialect Archive (Boas 2006, Boas et al. 2010, <http://www.tgdp.org>).

Part three discusses the semantic and syntactic changes that *mit* has undergone in TXG over the past 100 years. I first discuss case reduction of *mit* (dative is replaced by accusative or oblique case, e.g. *Da ham se mit die Kinder gespielt* ('There they played with the children')) in different contexts, highlighting the interaction of phonological and semantic factors, which trigger the re-alignment of the distribution of cases found with *mit*. Next, I discuss the distribution of cases with pronouns following *mit* (e.g. *Ich hab viel Deutsch mit ihn gesprochen* ('I talked a lot of German with him')). Then, I discuss a set of re-lexified English idiomatic expressions, in which the structure and meaning of English idioms remains intact, but the individual parts are now all German words (e.g. *war Freunde mit uns* ('was friends with us'), *er war mit das deutschen Baptisten* ('he was with the German Baptists'), *die Stadt nimmt na Masse Geld rein mit die tourists* ('the city takes in a lot of money with the tourists')). Finally, I offer a constructional analysis of the changes of *mit* over the past 100 years, showing how the notion of grammatical construction is a useful analytical tool for accounting for the interaction of syntactic, semantic, and phonological factors. I argue that the different properties of *mit* can best be accounted for within a constructional network (Boas 2011) linking the various senses and uses of *mit* with each other. In this context I also address the influence of English, which appears to play a supporting role in semantic and syntactic change.

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This study deals with the morpho-syntactic status of large-quantity expressions: *multum* in Latin, *beaucoup* in French and *mnogo* in Old and Modern Russian. Cross-linguistically, quantification oscillates between the nominal and the verbal domain. From a morpho-syntactic viewpoint, one expects a verbal quantifier to have an adverbial status (1) and a nominal quantifier to have the status of an adjective-determiner or a pronoun (2/3), as in the following Latin data.

- (1) *Multum te amamus*  
much you-ACC love-PRST-1P  
'We love you very much'
- (2) *multi docti homines*  
many-NOM.M.PL learned-NOM.M.PL man-NOM.M.PL  
'numerous learned men'
- (3) *Occident nonnullos, vulnerant multos*  
kill-PRST.3PL several-ACC.M.PL kill-PRST.3PL many-ACC.M.PL  
'They kill some of them, they injure many of them'

The different evolutionary stages of French and Russian exhibit, however, several convergent categorial "mismatches".

- (i) The so-called adverb used for verbal quantification originates from a nominal form, the singular-neuter-nominative/accusative of the adjective-determiner-pronoun in Latin and in Old-Slavic, and the expression *beau-coup* 'nice strike' in Middle French.
- (ii) Even in language stages where an inflected adjective-determiner quantifier is available, the adverb-like quantifier can be used for nominal quantification with the quantified NP expressed through a genitive or a PP introduced by prepositions meaning 'from/of'. The competition between the inflected adjective-determiner and the adverb-like quantifiers is governed not only by semantic but also by syntactic principles: the adverb-like quantifier is only used in subject and direct object positions. For Latin, it has been argued that this syntactic restriction is due to the nominative/accusative case form of *multum* (Maurel 1985). However, this hypothesis is invalidated by the fact that the adverb-like quantifier is unattested after a preposition governing the accusative case.

From a methodological viewpoint, our study will show the heuristic value of diachrony and language comparison. In the evolution from Latin to French, the phenomenon under study displays a double evolutionary cycle: the nominal expression *multum* becomes adverb-like, and then eventually evolves – through reanalysis – into a full-fledged nominal determiner, without restrictions as to its syntactic function and the cycle is reinitiated by *beau-coup*. In Russian, the evolution is much slower: in contemporary Russian the quantifier *mnogo* has lost its morphological nominal features and can be used for verbal quantification. It is nevertheless used for nominal quantification as well, but only in the nominative and the accusative. Hence, the analysis of the Russian data can shed some light on the past stages of French, for which no native speaker intuition is available.

From a theoretical viewpoint, this study will contribute to our understanding of the interactions between quantification, aspect and syntax. The specific research questions tackled in this study are the following:

- (i) How to account for the shift from a quantificational nominal expression towards a quantificational adverb?
- (ii) How to account for the syntactic restrictions of the invariable multum in Latin, the invariable mult in Early Old French, beaucoup in Middle French and mnogo in contemporary Russian.
- (iii) As for beaucoup in Modern French, is the evolutionary cycle completed or are there still residues which prevent this expression from functioning as a plain nominal determiner?
- (iv) Why is the quantifier class not homogeneous with respect to the evolution processes?
- (v) How can we account for the differences in the evolution pace between French and Russian?

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Timothy Colleman. On contact-induced change in argument structure constructions:  
Cases from Dutch and Afrikaans

Ghent University

This paper presents work-in-progress at the intersection of language contact research and construction grammar. Its overall aim is to show how the notions of distributional assimilation (aka semantic map assimilation) (Gast & Van der Auwera 2012) and polysemy copying (Heine & Kuteva 2005) can help explain contact-induced shifts in the semantic ranges of argument structure constructions (or other complex schematic constructions, for that matter). The main empirical focus is on a number of recent semasiological shifts in the Afrikaans double object construction, under the putative influence of English. Afrikaans developed out of 17<sup>th</sup> and 18<sup>th</sup> century Dutch, through extensive language contact with several Khoisan languages as well as Malay and Asian creole varieties of Portuguese (on the complex story of the formation of Afrikaans, see, e.g., Ponelis 1993, Roberge 1995, Deumert 2004). For the largest part of its history, however, i.e., since the early 19<sup>th</sup> century, it has also been in a situation of strong language contact with (South African) English. According to Ponelis (1993: 113), “[b]orrowing from English is by far the most sweeping linguistic change affecting present-day Afrikaans.”

Afrikaans, Dutch and English all display a double object argument structure with a subject and two bare NP objects, which, in the prototypical case, encode the theme and recipient participants in an act of giving. In each of the three languages, however, the verb slot of the construction does not only accommodate verbs of giving in the narrow sense of the word, but also verbs from a number of other, semantically related classes, so that next to ‘giving’ events, it can also encode events of future or conditional transfer, of intended causation of reception, of telling, teaching and showing, and so on – in Goldberg’s (1995, 2006) model of argument structure constructions as polysemous radial categories, these combinations can be seen as instantiating different constructional subsenses, in Croft’s (2003) alternative constructionist model as different verb-class-specific constructions. Interestingly, it seems that the semantic range of the Afrikaans construction increasingly comes to mirror that of its interlingual equivalent in English. On the basis of data from both a corpus of Afrikaans newspapers and the Internet, I will illustrate two shifts: (a) the extension of the Afrikaans double object construction to a class of semantically related verbs which used to fall outside of its semantic range in Afrikaans (and in Dutch) but the closest translational equivalents of which do occur in the double object construction in English, viz. ballistic motion verbs and (b) dwindling double object uses with verbs of dispossession, the Dutch equivalents of which do but the English equivalents of which do *not* occur in the double object construction. The latter of these shifts illustrates that distributional assimilation need not always involve the emergence of new polysemies but can also lead to semantic retraction. Time permitting, I will also briefly look into the question whether the ditransitive constructions of Dutch have been subject to English influence as well.

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Avelino Corral Esteban. Two examples of diachronic evolution: grammaticalization in Lakhota and emergence of a new construction in Cheyenne

Universidad Autónoma de Madrid

This paper addresses the issues of grammaticalization and emergence of new constructions in two Native American languages, namely Lakhota and Cheyenne, within the framework of Role and Reference Grammar (Van Valin & LaPolla, 1997). Thanks to its marked typological orientation, this theoretical framework makes it possible to see both the similarities and differences between different languages, as well as to solve the problems that arise when studying their grammar. In this paper, I attempt to give an diachronic account of:

- 1) a case of grammaticalization in Lakhota which deals with the evolution of the particle -*pi*, from its use as a plural marker until its use in a construction similar to the English-like passive voice, and
- 2) the emergence of a new construction in Cheyenne involving the desiderative aspectual operator *tanó/tanó'tov* influenced by the English language that turns out to be very similar to the accusative infinitive construction.

On the one hand, the example in Lakhota helps to provide conclusive evidence to decide on the existence or absence of passive in this Native American language. Leaving aside this example, this language does not show examples of an English-style passive, that is, considering the concept of 'passive' from the viewpoint of traditional grammar, and therefore, it will be necessary to study this issue from a different angle, presented in this case by RRG. To this aim, it will be crucial to analyze this language typologically in terms of the morpho-syntactic parameter denominated 'referential structure'. On the other hand, the example in Cheyenne submits a challenging case for the RRG theory of clause linkage since it appears to display a nuclear juncture type containing a Clause Linkage Marker (CLM), whose presence is believed to be a trademark feature to distinguish nuclear from core junctures. Thus, the finding seems to contradict a widely held assumption that it is not possible to have a CLM at this juncture level and consequently demonstrates that, although the RRG theory provides useful tools for the analysis and description of complex constructions, the boundaries between complex constructions cannot be regarded as so precise and determined. All in all, this paper proves the flexibility of RRG when it comes to identifying and accounting for the distinctive features of the different linguistic systems and also confirms it as a theory of universal grammar that is able to make strong cross-linguistic claims.



Serena Danesi. The expression of Predicative Possession in Sanskrit: origin and development

University of Bergen

While in Classical Sanskrit, predicative possession is regularly expressed with the genitive for the possessor, combined with a form of the verbs as ‘be’ or *bhū* ‘become’, in previous stages of the language (Vedic Sanskrit), the genitive was mainly a nominal modifier (adnominal possession), and the expression of predicative possession was primarily realized with the dative. This phenomenon is concomitant with the dative and genitive merging.

I propose to analyze the origin and the development of the Sanskrit possessive construction, providing both a syntactic and a cognitive explanation based on the Semantic Map Model (Haspelmath 2000) and Heine’s (1997) cognitive analysis. According to Heine, Possession is a fuzzy and complex notion, not a linguistic construction, and in order to be expressed, it makes use of other, more concrete, conceptual domains (like Action, Location, Existence, etc.). At the initial stage, the expression, namely the so-called ‘source schema’, has only the literal meaning. Then, the expression gradually appears in contexts which admit a possessive interpretation until this interpretation becomes grammaticalized.

In the present discussion, I will show that in Vedic Sanskrit, the expressions with the dative and the genitive are ‘source schemas’ in the sense proposed by Heine because possessiveness is not the only meaning they convey. Besides, even when they express possession, they still retain much of their concrete value. Thus, I will investigate:

- The emergence and schematization of these source schemas for Possession: the “goal schema” and the “genitive schema”;
- The grammaticalization paths (from Vedic to Classical Sanskrit) towards the conventional way for expressing Possession in Sanskrit.

Moreover, I will argue that:

- In the original Dative Possessive Construction, the Dative is both Recipient and Possessor. Through a process of metaphorical extension (Lakoff & Johnson 1980, Nikiforidou 1991), the meaning of POSSESSION shared by both the Dative and the Genitive allows the Genitive to replace the Dative in such construction. As a consequence, the two constructions become synonymous with a subsequent loss in the morphological case system (Barðdal 2009).
- Clitic personal pronouns are the ‘bridging context’ from adnominal genitive to adverbial genitive, because in Sanskrit, dative and genitive clitic personal pronouns have the same form in the 1st and 2nd persons (me = DAT *mahyam* and GEN *mama*; te = DAT *tubhyam* and GEN *tava*) and, in possessive constructions, they have an ambiguous interpretation:

- (1)      *ásti*              *té*              *‘parītaṃ*      *śávaḥ* (RV VIII 24.9)  
be.3SG.PRES   2SG.DAT/GEN   unsurpassed   power.NOM.N
1. Dative pronoun – adverbial constituent:  
‘Unsurpassed power is to you’ = ‘You have unsurpassed power’
2. Genitive pronoun – adnominal constituent  
‘Your power is unsurpassed’

The dative possessor is reanalyzed as a genitive possessor: The adnominal genitive becomes an adverbial genitive.

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It is well known that the progressive ‘be + V-ing’ form in English is more grammaticalized than its analogues in (most) other European languages (see, e.g., Bertinetto 2000). For instance, as described by De Wit & Patard (2013), the French (present) progressive, expressed by ‘*être en train de* + V-inf’, occurs in fewer types of context and is overall less frequently used. However, these observed differences between the English and French progressive are hardly ever accounted for in the existing literature (cf. Lachaux (2005) for an exception). In this presentation, we propose to fill this gap by offering a diachronic explanation, thereby also integrating observations from other Germanic and Romance languages (see De Wit, Patard & Brisard 2013).

We will show that English, unlike most other Germanic languages, has lost the Proto-Germanic aspectual prefix system that was still relatively productive in the Old English period (Brinton 1988). Consequently, by the end of the 11th century, overt aspect marking was lacking in English – an aspectual vacuum which would constitute an ideal context for the rise of the progressive in later stages (Strang 1970: 351-352; Núñez-Pertejo 2004: 67). In contrast, in Dutch and German, where aspectual prefixes have remained quite productive, the progressive has never fully grammaticalized. On the other hand, in Icelandic, the only Germanic language which has also lost its aspectual prefixes (McWhorter 2007: 71), the progressive did grammaticalize to about the same extent as the English one (Jóhannsdóttir 2011). Another important reason why the idea of an aspectual gap features more prominently in the history of English, leading to developments unattested in other (neighboring) languages, is that the English perfect has never evolved into a past perfective construction, unlike its equivalents in Dutch and German, which do mark perfectivity. Given this formal marking of aspect in the domain of the past, there was less need for the development of another aspectual marker in those languages.

At first sight, there seem to be indications of an aspectual gap in Middle French, too: the Latin aspectual prefix system, which was already decaying in Late Latin, had completely disappeared by the Middle French period (Buridant 2000: 354). Nevertheless, there was little language-internal motivation for the grammaticalization of ‘*être en train de* + V-inf’, since there existed, from Middle French onwards, a strong aspectual contrast in the past, inflectionally marked by the opposition between the ‘*imparfait*’ and the ‘*passé simple*’. Thus, unlike English, French has never actually been faced with an aspectual vacuum. The fact that in other Romance languages, such as Spanish (Bertinetto 2000; Laca 2004), the presence of a formally marked perfective/imperfective opposition in the past has not prevented the development of a more grammaticalized progressive than ‘*être en train de* + V-inf’ can then be related to the reluctances of prescriptivist grammarians and the influential French Academy to accept periphrases into the French language (Gougenheim 1971: 63-67) – a type of prescriptivism that has never been attested in Spanish.

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Tonya Kim Dewey,<sup>1</sup> Michael Dunn,<sup>2</sup> Carlee Arnett,<sup>3</sup> Thórhallur Eythórsson<sup>4</sup> & Jóhanna Barðdal<sup>5</sup>. Modeling the directionality of change: Oblique subjects in the history of Germanic

<sup>1</sup>University of Bergen/Ghent University; <sup>2</sup>Max Planck Institute for Psycholinguistics, Nijmegen;

<sup>3</sup>University of California, Davis; <sup>4</sup>University of Iceland; <sup>5</sup>Ghent University

A resurgence of optimism with regard to syntactic reconstruction has been spreading in the historical linguistic community during the last years (Eythórsson & Barðdal 2011, Willis 2011, Barðdal & Eythórsson 2012a, Barðdal & Eythórsson 2012b), leading to a novel approach to the reconstructability of grammar and syntax. The conceptualization of language within the theoretical framework of Construction Grammar has resulted in a new implementation of the Comparative Method, namely in the realm of syntax and grammar. Since Construction Grammar views larger and complex grammatical structures as form–meaning or form–function correspondences, exactly like words, the status of the grammar also becomes more lexicon-like, and as such grammar becomes a legitimate object of the Comparative Method. Given this new tool to reconstruct grammar and syntax, it is a timely enterprise to start comparing and reconstructing patterns that recur among the earliest attested daughters of a given language family, in order to try, test and eventually revise, this new methodology.

The focus of the present work is argument structure constructions where the subject-like argument is not in the nominative case. As a part of a larger Indo-European historical-comparative project, we have gathered primary data from the earliest Germanic languages, including Gothic, Old Norse-Icelandic, Old Swedish, Old and Middle English, Old and Middle High German, and Middle Dutch. These data are in the process of being organized into a database, the NonCanCase Database, stored at the University of Bergen (<http://noncancase.h.uib.no>). This is an interactive electronic database with multiple search functions, including searching for lexemes, sememes, etymons, subject case marking, object case marking, valency patterns, languages, language branches and language families. On the basis of this work, we aim to present a near-exhaustive list of predicates selecting for accusative and dative subjects that are reconstructable for Proto-Germanic. We will reconstruct these as predicate-specific and even predicate- class-specific argument structure constructions, as being a part of a larger reconstruction of the grammar of Proto-Germanic. We will also present a computational phylogenetic analysis using the MULTISTATE method (Pagel, Meade & Barker 2004), which allows us to test models of changes in subject case marking from Proto-Germanic to the modern languages. The MULTISTATE method was originally developed in evolutionary biology and subsequently in anthropology (Jordan et al. 2009, Currie et al. 2010), but has so far not been applied on language data.

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Willis, David. 2011. Reconstructing Last Week's Weather: Syntactic Reconstruction and Brythonic Free Relatives.  
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Holger Diessel. The linear organization of complex sentences: Processing and grammaticalization

University of Jena

Complex sentences have been studied extensively from a crosslinguistic perspective (e.g. VanValin and LaPolla 1997; Cristofaro 2003; Givón 2009). The bulk of this research is concerned with the analysis of structural parameters of clause linkage, e.g. the encoding of TAM distinctions, the occurrence of nominal morphology on the verb, and the omission of arguments under coreference. However, there is one aspect of clause linkage that has received little attention in this research: the linear organization of complex sentences or more specifically the position of subordinate clauses. In this paper I investigate correlations between the position of subordinate clauses and other parameters of clause linkage.

Drawing on data from a stratified sample of more than one hundred languages the paper shows that pre- and postposed subordinate clauses have very different morphosyntactic properties: Preposed subordinate clauses are structurally more reduced and nominalized than their postposed counterparts and typically include a final subordinator, e.g. a subordinating suffix or free morpheme, whereas postposed subordinate clauses are usually marked by an initial conjunction, complementizer, or relative marker.

The paper is divided into two parts: The first part describes the above mentioned asymmetries between pre- and postposed subordinate clauses from a synchronic perspective, and the second part analyzes them in light of their developments. The focus of the diachronic analysis will be on the position of the subordinator. Earlier studies have argued that the position of the subordinator is motivated by (syntactic) processing (cf. Hawkins 1994; 2004; see also Diessel 2005, 2008); but the current paper outlines an alternative account in terms of grammaticalization. The diachronic analysis I propose is parallel to the one that has been proposed for certain word order pairs in typological research on word order correlations. For instance, Bybee (1988) argued that the order of verb and object correlates with that of auxiliary and verb because auxiliaries are commonly derived from the verbs of verbal complements. In a similar vein, I argue that the position of subordinators in pre- and postposed subordinate clauses is immediately determined by their position in the source construction. For instance, it is well known that the subordinate markers of (some) complement clauses are frequently derived from quotative verbs. In the grammaticalization literature, this development is commonly described as a case of reinforcement; but syntactically it involves the reanalysis of two recursively embedded subordinate clauses in which the higher level clause, i.e. the quotative clause, is reduced to a subordinator, i.e. a complementizer. Since quotative clauses typically function as some kind of complement, they tend to precede the main verb in OV languages and follow it in VO languages so that preverbal quotative verbs develop into final markers of preposed subordinate clauses, whereas postverbal quotative verbs are reanalyzed as initial complementizers of postposed subordinate clauses. Parallel analyses will be presented for other types of subordinators in pre- and postposed adverbial clauses and pre- and postnominal relative clauses. Challenging the syntactic processing account, the current paper concludes that the correlation between the position of subordinate clauses and the position of the subordinator is more effectively explained by local diachronic processes than by global processing principles.

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Most studies on locative verbs focus on (a) the internal organization of this verbal category and its position within various verb classifications (e.g. Levin 1993, Crego García 2000, Cifuentes Honrubia 2000) and (b) the syntactic analysis of their arguments, and more particularly the status of the locative complement (Rojo 1985, Alarcos 1990). Our objective is to compare the syntax and semantics of the frequently used locative verbs *poner* and *meter* in Spanish with the behavior of their French cognate counterparts *poser* and *mettre* and to propose a diachronic explanation. Both from an intralinguistic and cross-linguistic viewpoint, previous studies have not yet described in detail the degree of correspondence between both quasi-synonymous pairs.

Indeed, in some contexts the lexemes are clearly interchangeable (*meter/poner pan en la mesa*; *mettre/poser du pain sur la table*, 'to put bread on the table'), whereas in others this is impossible (*El río se mete en el mar* vs. *\*El río se pone en el mar* vs. *\*La rivière se met / se pose dans la mer*, 'the river flows into the sea'). Moreover, a previous study (Comer, Enghels, Vanderschueren in preparation) has shown that in Spanish the use of *poner* and *meter* goes beyond their locative meaning and semantically extends — and even grammaticalizes — towards

- (1) the domain of transfer (*Te pusieron muchos regalos* 'They gave you many presents'; *Me ha metido unas manzanas podridas* 'He gave me some rotten apples')
- (2) (semi-) copulative uses (*Se pone nervioso* 'He gets nervous'; *Se mete monja* 'she's becoming a nun') and,
- (3) causative/inchoative uses (*Ponerse a reír* 'to start laughing'; *Meterse a trabajar* 'to start working').

The purpose of this presentation is double. First, based on a large contemporary corpus for Spanish and French (on the basis of the CREA and FRANTEXT databases), we examine to what extent these uses actually occur with the four verbs, and to what extent the Spanish model can be applied to French data. It will be shown that in modern Spanish mainly *poner* presents more grammaticalized uses — that is as a semi-copulative or causative verb. In contrast, its near-equivalent *meter* behaves more frequently like a true locative verb. In French, the situation is the other way around: *mettre* seems to display more grammaticalized uses than *poser* does. In the second part of the analysis, we will provide an answer for this different behavior by turning to the analysis of a diachronic corpus (examples will be selected from CORDE and FRANTEXT). This part of the study aspires to map out accurately the diachronic semantic development of the verbs in order to detect when and how their particular meanings and how their frequencies evolved from the 13th century up till now.

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Nida Jampathip and Pittayawat Pittayaporn. Historical development of the negative “mâj” in Thai

Chulalongkorn University

Negation in Thai dialects is an example of structural variation that seems puzzling from a synchronic point of view but can find explanation in the diachronic evolution of the language. Most present-day Thai dialects use a preverbal *mâj* to mark negative predicates, except for the Petchaburi dialect, which instead places the negation of the verb phrase (Tingsabadh et.al, 1991) as illustrated.

- (1) a. Preverbal negation in the Bangkok dialect.

*pī: ní: tɛʰǎn mâj tʰām nā:*  
year this I NEG do rice.field  
This year I do not grow rice.

- b. Postverbal negation in the Petchaburi dialect.

*pī: ní: tɛʰǎn tʰām nā: mâj*  
year this I do rice.field NEG  
This year I do not grow rice.

This paper traces the historical emergence of *mâj*, proposing that the negator emerged after 1767 A.D. through the process of univerbation (Brinton & Traugott, 2005:48) between Old Thai negator (*bò:*) *mi* and the verb *dâj* ‘to get’ in resultative constructions. In many Southeast Asian languages, the result of an activity is not necessarily included in the meaning of the verb but can be expressed by a resultative verb like ‘to get’ (Jenny, 2012). In this construction, the result can be canceled by negating the verb expressing result. Old Thai indicates that the co-occurrence of the *mi* and the verb *dâj* increased dramatically in the late seventeenth century. In the most instances, the phrase *mi+ dâj* is found in the construction *hă: + NP + (bò:) mi + dâj*. For example:

- (2) *hă: phūdāj ca samǎ: mi dâj*  
seek person may comparable NEG get  
Someone who can compare to him cannot be found.  
(Tribhumpramalai, 1656-1688)

- (3) *phájā:muay nán hă: rā:ttɛʰabùt bò:mi dâj*  
King that seek son NEG get  
The king does not have a son.  
(Bhumrajatham, 1688-1767 A.D.)

Before 1688 A.D. the negative (*bò:*)*mi* followed the verb phrase and negated the resultative verb *dâj* to convey that the result of seeking did not emerge as illustrated in (2). In the late 17th century, the construction became a fixed negative expression with an emphatic meaning. At this stage, the meanings of “seek” and “get” are bleached as a result of the frequent occurrence with the negator (*bò:*)*mi*. After 1688 A.D., however, the *mi+dâj* in the fixed expression *hă: + NP + (bò:)mi + dâj* contracted to *mâj* through the process of univerbation. The new negator was then extended to the preverbal position and replaced *(bò:)mi* as the default negator in Thai.

In this diachronic account, the synchronically aberrant postverbal negation in the dialect of Petchaburi is explainable as a relic from an intermediate step in the evolution of *mâj*. This paper is thus an illustration of how the understanding of diachronic development explains synchronic variation among genetically related languages.



The aim of this paper is a systematic contrastive-historical analysis of Greek and Vedic on the basis of Levin's (1993) and Levin & Rappaport's (2005) classification of verbs and verbal alternations. The contrastive study of the historical relationships between morpho-syntactic encoding and verbal classes and alternations in Greek and Vedic can explain the differences between the two languages and provide a better understanding of the diachronic evolution of voice and transitivity (the contrast between active-passive appears to emerge as a later development, gradually encompassing different areas of the valency alternations).

In Ancient Greek, the mediopassive morphology marks a variety of valency alternations, such as passive, anticausative, reflexive, indirect reflexive middle, reciprocal. Two opposite tendencies can be observed in the development of Greek: emergence of lability in the domain of the causative-anticausative alternations and productivity of the morphological marking of all other valency alternations (cf. (1) vs. (2)).

- (1) Ancient Greek  
*hápaks gàr toû eniautoû hekástou anoígetai*  
once PTC the.GEN year.GEN each open.MP.PRS.3SG  
'for once only in each year it (the sanctuary) opens' [D.59,76]
- (2) Hellenistic Koine Greek  
*anoígei*  
open.ACT.PRS.3SG  
'(it/the sanctuary) opens'

On the one hand, the number of verbs that can participate to a transitive-passive alternation, with a mediopassive ending in the passive construction, increases (from Homeric to Classical, and from Classical to Hellenistic Koine Greek); on the other hand, new causative-anticausative alternations are marked with active morphology in both constructions (see Lavidas 2009), while the mediopassive cannot mark indirect reflexive middles.

By contrast, Vedic exhibits an opposite type of evolution (see, for instance, Kulikov 2003). Labile verbs or verbal forms, not infrequent in early Vedic (cf. *svádate* 'makes sweet (for oneself) / is sweet'; *vāṛdh-uh* '(they)have grown [intr.] / have increased'; etc.), become rare or exceptional, while the morpho-syntactic encoding of voice (cf. the passive suffix *ya-* in the present system) and transitivity oppositions becomes more regular and productive, ousting the middle forms (originally more straightforwardly associated with intransitivity), which, eventually results in the degrammaticalization of the middle and decline of lability.

Both languages furnish valuable evidence for a diachronic typological analysis of transitivity, voice systems and verbal alternations – in particular, for a study of possible diachronic scenarios of the rise and disappearance of voice oppositions, such as active/passive.

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Larrivée Pierre: Irreversible pathways of evolution: an empirical evaluation of psycholinguistic proposals

Université de Caen

The contention of linguistics is that language change is not a “random walk through the space of possible combinations” (Battye and Robert 1995 : 11). A deterministic approach has been proposed by the Grammaticalisation framework to suggest that there is a tendency for items to evolve historically into increasingly more abstract elements on a pathway of change (Traugott and Dasher 2002 i.a.). In other words, change is unidirectional along pathways of evolution. One example of this is items evolving into n-words that do typically go through a polarity phase preceded by a positive indefinite value (Haspelmath 1997). Such pathways of change would account both for cross-linguistic patterns and for direction of historical change in particular languages.

New proposals on the unidirectionality of change have suggested such deterministic evolution to depend on principles of acquisition: learners would attribute items the most specified trait compatible with the input (Jäger 2010). Items can thus gain a stronger trait but cannot lose it, leading to an assumption of irreversible change (Willis 2011). Thus, Negative Polarity Items would be expected to become negatives, and once they are negatives, they could neither retain nor recreate polarity uses.

These assumptions are tested here against the evolution of declining n-words in early French. Their declining status allows for the verification of whether the predicted irreversibility obtains, in a way that is not possible for productive polyfunctional words such as Dutch *enig* (Hoeksema 2011) that because of their polyfunctionality cannot be used to rule out that negative items maintain or recreate polarity uses. In order to verify the predicted irreversibility, an exhaustive quantitative survey is offered of all the occurrences of early French declining n-words *nul*, *nului* and *nesun* in literary and legal material from the 12th to the 16th century. While *nului* in legal texts only has negative uses when it is about to disappear, it maintains a proportion of strong polarity uses in literary texts, which are the majority of polarity uses of *nul* that nonetheless still has weak polarity uses in the last stages of its history. *Nesun* actually develops weaker polarity uses as it is disappearing.

The novel quantitative investigation presented here contradicts an irreversible change scenario: negatives can maintain and recreate polarity uses. Change is therefore not irreversible. A better narrative is one in which adjacent uses in a semantic map are allowed, as per Haspelmath’s typological model. The reason for this is speculated to be that adjacent uses share bridge contexts in a way that non-adjacent uses do not.

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In a recent paper, König (2012) calls for more collaboration between contrastive analysis and historical-comparative linguistics over cognate constructions in languages of the same family which appear to represent consecutive stages along the same path of grammaticalization. One of the potential examples cited by König are V1-conditionals in English (1) and German (2):

- (1) Should you change your mind, no one would blame you.
- (2) *Kommt Karl, gehe ich.*  
'Comes Karl, I leave ~ Should Carl come, I will leave'

Since English V1-protases are characterized (inter alia) by a severely reduced paradigmatic variability in lexical and morphological/functional terms compared with their German counterparts, they do indeed appear to represent a more advanced stage of grammaticalization. In our talk, we revisit this hypothesis using a panchronic, corpus-based methodology with reference to two parameters of variation, viz. finite protasis verbs and sequence of tenses, from Old English and Old High German through present-day English and German. The results (cf. Leuschner / Van den Nest in prep.) show that the grammaticalization of V1-conditionals has been a relatively one-sided affair which affected English much more than German not only in terms of quantity (viz. speed) but also quality. Having developed a restrictive functional niche early, English V1-conditionals became even more restricted in the course of their history, turning their functional limitations into structural ones while also being caught up in several large-scale developments of English grammar which further enhanced the already significant differences with German. As a result, resemblances between synchronic contrasts and diachronic stages are more limited than a contrastive analysis alone leads us to expect, and V1-conditionals turn out above all to illustrate the special position of English within Germanic that is not unlike that of French within Romance as the most 'grammaticalized' language of its family (cf. Lamiroy/De Mulder 2011).

\*Based partly on work by Daan Van den Nest.

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Mikołaj Nkollo. Gap filling and its diffusion. A case study from Latin and Old Romance diachronic syntax

Adam Mickiewicz University

It is intended in this paper to show how data from related languages might be useful for ascertaining the diffusion of contact-induced grammatical shift. The case will be illustrated with Latin and Old Romance reciprocal markers.

The hypothesis is as follows: if an instance of contact-induced change appears in proto-language, it is likely to spill over into all its descendants and to affect at the same pace the respective segments of their grammar.

Latin reciprocity consisted of a series of non-synonymous form-meaning pairings. Reciprocal constructions with timeless reference and non-specific participant NPs (König, 2005: 8) used to surface as clusters of two adjacent nouns (e.g. *Cives civibus prodesse oportet* 'It behoves citizens to be helpful to each other'). Two structural changes, both language-internal and contact-induced (gap-filling), began to affect their cumulative character, thus setting the stage for the subsequent indiscriminate expression of reciprocal variants.

First, reciprocity came to be expressed on its own, after the contrast: *alius* (other, speaking of many) vs. *alter* (other, speaking of exactly two) had been reduced (Meillet, 1948: 239; Tekavčić, 1980: 159). The remaining form, *alter*, extended subsequently to all contexts, including reciprocity, to convey the idea of otherness (Bertocchi et al., 2010: 158). Second, the need to regularize the expression of nominal reference, prompted by Greek-Latin bilingualism of literate speakers, induced them to replicate articles (Penny, 2002: 145). As timeless states of affairs usually go hand in hand with generic NPs, cumulating this functional feature alongside reciprocity was no longer needed.

Not only did the advent of articles modify the NP syntax, but also reshaped the grammar of reciprocal sentences. As a consequence, *cives civibus* came to be expressed, to take a hypothesized Portuguese example, as: *Cidadãos uns aos outros* (with zero marking being meaningful; see Lloyd, 1987/1993: 446-447 ; Mattos E Silva, 2008: 369).

The change is traced back to Latin rather than to any of its successors, as evidenced by the corpora of each of the major varieties of Old Romance (areal diffusion). Furthermore, both old (cumulating timelessness and reciprocity) and newer (with split functional features), models are documented in the earliest Romance texts (pace), with no observable semantic difference. The restructuring cannot, then, be viewed as representing a Romance innovation. Both, cumulative (1-2) and split (3-4), layers are illustrated below.

1. French, 12th century

... *Que prodom doit prodom atreire et onorer et losangier*  
'as noblemen have to attract, pay tribute and extol each other.'

2. Spanish, 14th century

(...) *que fidalgo a fidalgo quando' prende, non deve dessonrarlo*  
'For among noblemen, when one captures another, he must not downgrade him.'

3. French, 12th century

*Oïl, ce ne cresra ja nus qu'il la beisast sanz fere plus que l'une chose l'autre atret.*  
'Indeed, nobody will believe that he only kissed her without doing more, as these two acts are known to entail each other'

#### 4. Catalan, 13th century

*E l' escuder li dix que los uns secrets d' amors revelen los alters*  
'And the squire said: "Some of Love's secrets reveal others".'

All in all, data from several languages help predict the following patterns in the diffusion of gap filling (Heine & Kuteva, 2005: 124 "with the replication of a category on the model of another language, the replica language may acquire a new category for which previously there was no or no appropriate equivalent") from replica parent language to its successors:

- its areal scope shows no significant gaps likely to resist a new structure
- its pace, in spite of possible longevity in target languages of alternative mechanisms, either inherited or idiomatic, is the same all round
- if a restructuring happens to affect other grammatical subsystems in the parent language, it is spilt over into the same grammatical segments in languages stemming from it.

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**Noël 2014**

Dirk Noël. Contrastive diachronic construction grammar

*University of Hong Kong*

Constructionist approaches to historical linguistics, increasingly referred to as “diachronic construction grammar”, (should) take a holistic, cognitively adequate, view at shifts in the constructional resources of languages. Various strands of research can be detected in diachronic construction grammar. One of them grew out of grammaticalization theory, but differs from orthodox grammaticalization theory in that it places the development of constructions in the context of the evolution of formally and/or functionally similar patterns. A *contrastive* diachronic construction grammatical approach does not merely throw up interesting similarities and differences in the evolution of cognate areas of the constructional taxonomies of different languages which are in need of explanation, and point to explanations for them that make reference to differences in relevant parts of their constructions, but can also lead to language contact explanations. This state-of-the-art paper will situate research taking such an approach within the wider diachronic construction grammatical enterprise.





Muriel Norde and Kristel Van Goethem. Similes, affixoids and debonding: a corpus-based analysis of 'giant' in Dutch, German, Swedish and French

Humboldt-Universität zu Berlin & FNRS Université Catholique de Louvain

Simile compounds such as *blood-red* ('red as blood') or *stone-cold* ('cold as stone') have been observed to give rise to so-called affixoids, or "morphemes which look like parts of compounds, and do occur as lexemes, but have a specific and more restricted meaning when used as part of a compound" (Booij 2009: 208). In this paper, we will present a contrastive survey of the morpheme originally meaning 'giant' in four languages: Dutch, German, Swedish and French. In Dutch, German and Swedish, both simile compounds and affixoid constructions are found, whereas in French *géant* is best analysed as an adjective as it agrees with the head noun. Examples from all four languages are given in (1)-(2):

- (1) *reuzenboom* (Dutch); *Riesenbaum* (German); *jätteträd* (Swedish); *arbre géant* (French) 'giant tree' (= a tree as tall as a giant)
- (2) *reuzeflater* (Dutch); *Riesenschnitzer* (German); *jättetabbe* (Swedish); *gaffe géante* (French) 'giant gaffe' (≠ a gaffe as tall as a giant)

This collocational expansion is not just found in nominal compounds, but in adjectival compounds as well. In Dutch, German and Swedish, this prefixoid has developed further into a purely intensifying prefix meaning 'hugely', 'enormously'; advanced bleaching is evidenced by the collocation of a prefixoid meaning 'giant' with affixoids meaning 'small', as in (3b):

- (3) a. *reuzegroot* (Dutch); *riesengroß* (German); *jättestor* (Swedish) 'huge' (= as large, tall as a giant)
- b. *reuzeinteressant* (Dutch); *rieseninteressant* (German); *jätteintressant* (Swedish); 'hugely interesting' (≠ as interesting as a giant)
- c. *reuzeklein* (Dutch); *riesenklein* (German); *jätteliten* (Swedish) 'tiny' (≠ as small as a giant)

Adopting a construction-based approach to morphosyntactic change (Booij 2010), we will argue that the constructional schema for simile adjectives in (4a) developed into a schema for intensified adjectives in (4b).

- (4) a.  $\langle [[a]_{Ni} [b]_{Aj}]_{Ak} \Leftrightarrow [as\ SEM_j\ as\ SEM_i]_k \rangle$   
e.g. Dutch *reuzegroot* (exx. (3a))
- b.  $\langle \langle a \rangle_{INT} [b]_{Ai} \rangle_{Aj} \Leftrightarrow [very\ SEM_i]_j \rangle$   
e.g. Dutch *reuzeinteressant*, *reuzeklein* (exx. (3b-c))

This approach is slightly different from the one advanced in Hüning & Booij fc. where the same schema is assumed for the constructions in (4a-b). We chose however to consider them different, not only because of special formal and semantic properties of affixoids (Hoeksema 2012, Norde & Van Goethem fc.) but also because the affixoids in (4b), but not the compounding elements in (4a), may occur independently as intensifying adverbs. The result of this type of debonding (Norde 2009, Norde & Van Goethem fc.) is illustrated in (5a-b).

- (5) a. *Eigenlijk valt het vasten reuze mee.* (Dutch; NLCOW2012)  
 'In fact the fasting diet turns out much better than expected'
- b. *Es hat uns riesen Spaß gemacht* (German; DECOW2012)  
 'We enjoyed ourselves tremendously'

The emergence of affixoids, and subsequent debonding of some of them, give rise to the following research questions:

- I : What are the differences and similarities between Dutch, German, Swedish and French with respect to the usage of bound and free forms of morphemes meaning 'giant'?
- In which construction types do they occur?
  - Do they differ in type frequency across the languages in our sample? Which words can they collocate with?
  - Do we have to assume a process of debonding for French as well, or do Germanic and Romance languages behave differently in this respect?
- II : Is there a relation between the degree of bleaching and debonding?

Data will be drawn from the COW corpus of web texts (Schäfer & Bildhauer 2012). For each language, 1000 sentences containing free forms and 1000 sentences containing bound forms will be selected at random and analysed for construction types and R1 collocations.

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My paper deals with German causative constructions with the auxiliary *lassen*, e.g. *Er ließ seinen Sohn den Brief abtippen* (i.e. 'He made his son type the letter', Comrie 1976:300) and the Dutch equivalent with *laten*. The subject of the embedded sentence ("seinen Sohn") is called the causee (Dixon 2000:31). As a rule, the causee is put in the accusative case in both German and Dutch, but in the history of both languages various types of *lassen/laten*-constructions contained a dative causee. I have carried out a diachronic and contrastive corpus study to investigate what types of dative causee construction existed, and what motivated the use of a dative causee.

A first type of causative construction has a weakly agentive main verb of perception, such as *zien* ('see'). Here, already in the Middle Dutch period (1150-1500) there was competition between the accusative and the dative as the case of the causee. The dative causee construction was later generalized, in that it could contain other weakly agentive main verbs such as *hopen* ('hope'), but in present-day Dutch the dative causee is again restricted to perception verbs only, for example *Ik liet het aan haar zien* (i.e. 'I showed [lit. 'let see'] it to her'). Interestingly, in the German language more or less the same evolution can be observed, but in the nineteenth century the German dative causee construction died out, presumably due to normative influence. This type of causative construction has undergone regrammaticalization, in that the construction "*lassen/laten* + infinitive" was reanalyzed as a single, ditransitive verb (cf. Kuroda 1995:41), resulting in the fact that it no longer coded the grammatical category of causative voice, but rather that of active voice. This hypothesis is corroborated by 21st-century internet examples in which a Dutch dative causee construction with a perception verb can already be put in the passive voice, e.g. *Alles werd aan ons laten zien* ('Everything was shown [lit. 'let see'] to us').

But there was competition between the accusative and the dative in combination with other types of main verb as well. For example, in Middle High German a dative causee could occur in combination with an intransitive main verb, but this construction slowly died out during the following centuries. What is more, slowly but surely a dative causee construction with a transitive, strongly agentive main verb (such as 'write') came into being and exploded in frequency in the 18th century. By contrast, a similar construction was already very frequent in the Middle Dutch period, but then gradually fell into disuse over the following centuries. At this point, it is not clear what motivated the use of a dative causee in these cases. Pure formal analogy to those constructions with a transitive weakly agentive main verb is one of the possibilities.

It can be concluded that certain causative constructions followed a similar grammaticalization path in both German and Dutch, but other types evolved quite differently and have not yet divulged all of their secrets.

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## Reinöhl 2014

### Uta Reinöhl. An outlier in the family: Indo-Aryan branching off from Indo-European in its route to adpositions and configurationality

University of Cologne

In this talk, I will address the question of the homogeneity of the part of speech of simple adpositions in modern Indo-European (IE) languages – connected to which is the rise of configurationality in this language family. It has been claimed by many that simple adpositions in IE arise essentially along the same lines, namely through reanalysis of the Proto Indo-European local particles as adpositions, yielding such elements as English *in*, *on*, *at*, French *à* or *de*, German *in* and *auf* etc. This claim has been made repeatedly and explicitly for Indo-Aryan (IA) also, most recently by Bubenik (2006). On the other hand, it has been noted by many that IA is an oddity within IE in that it possesses postpositions rather than prepositions. To this day, this is commonly connected to word order correlations such as IA from Vedic onwards being and remaining OV, while Romance and other branches underwent a shift to a general VO syntax. It is my claim that the difference in placement is only the most easily conceivable difference, and that adpositions in modern IA in fact differ on a much deeper level from adpositions in other branches of IE; in fact, they are a different category altogether. This is all the more striking as it is safe to say that Vedic, Ancient Greek, Latin, and other ancient IE varieties essentially still had more or less the same elements to work with. In particular, Vedic just as much as other ancient IE varieties possesses the same local particles which are reanalyzed as adpositions in other branches.

I will outline in my talk the alternative development taken in IA – both the reasons behind the loss of local particles in this branch and the development of other, unrelated elements into adpositions. Further, I will point out the deeper repercussions of this alternative route taken by Indo-Aryan, which is no less than an alternative route to configurationality, and which has so far largely remained uncommented on in the literature. The rise of configurationality has by many been located with local particles being reanalyzed as prepositions, bringing about as a concomitant prepositional phrases, Hewson & Bubenik (2006) and Luraghi (2010) being recent examples. I will show that there is an alternative path to configurationality and that therefore, the notion of a homogeneous drift across IE (Sapir 1921) must be revised in the domain of case in this language family.

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Stephanie Russo. Remoteness Distinctions: universal/typological and contact-related considerations

University of Texas at Austin

Whether internal or external linguistic factors are ultimately responsible for the emergence of remoteness distinctions (RDs) (i.e. the distance from the deictic center (Botne 2012) in the Standard Average European linguistic area (henceforth known as SAE) remains debated. The synchronic data, as illustrated by Alicante Spanish, shows that RDs developed within the tense-aspect system. Specifically the periphrastic perfect (1a) acquired a *hodiernal* 'today' interpretation in opposition to the preterite (1b), which signals a *prehodiernal* 'before today' event:

- (1) a. *Os hemos llamado hace unas horas*  
 You have-1pl.AUX.PRES call-PART.PST ago some hours  
 'We called you a few hours ago.'
- b. *Os llaman hace una semana.*  
 You call-1pl.PRET ago a week  
 'We called you a week ago.' (Schwenter 1994: 87)

A number of studies that have appeared in the literature on RDs in Romance normally fall into one of two camps, either a typological/universal account or a contact-related one. In terms of universals and typology, previous literature (Fleischman 1983; Bybee et al., 1994; Dahl & Hedin 2000) argues that synchronic patterns of RDs are directly related to a universal tendency (known as the Aoristic Drift) whereby subsequent semantic shifts of the periphrastic perfect/preterit contrast give rise to RDs at stage III of a four-stage grammaticalization pathway perfect > perfective. On the other hand, evidence from Drinka (2003) proposes that the Aoristic Drift in the SAE is solely linked to contact, stating that the periphrastic perfect first began to semantically shift in Parisian French as early as the 12th and 13th centuries and slowly diffused to the rest of Europe in a wave-like pattern through contact. These previous studies fail to give a comprehensive account of both sides of the diachronic story. Thus, I present new evidence from a small subset of Romance varieties that bears on this dispute in order to illustrate the link between universal/typological tendencies and contact. Furthermore, I explore the extent to which we can tease apart universal/typological tendencies from contact.

First, the study shows that all Romance varieties surveyed appeal to native morphology to encode RDs, which supports a universal/typological account for RD patterns in the SAE. Second, data from Lorrain and Basque (a non-genetically related language in the SAE) show that contact is just as likely an explanation for the spread of RDs in the SAE as are universal/typological tendencies since the idea of RDs may have been borrowed from the discursive environment and mapped onto the tense-aspect system. Third, the study concludes that synchronic patterns of RDs in the SAE are most likely the result of areal and universal/typological tendencies working in concert and thus cannot be easily teased apart.

In conclusion, language-internal and language-external motivations are evaluated to show how genetically related languages develop RDs over a linguistic area. This study contributes to our deeper understanding of linguistic change in Romance varieties and more broadly to the fields of Historical and Contact linguistics.

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## Turunen 2014

### Rigina Turunen. Innovation in person conjugation leading to asymmetry in object marking: Case of 1PL subjects and nominative objects in Colloquial Finnish

University of Helsinki

It is widely believed nowadays that constraints on diachronic change and on dialect variation can be detected by means of typological work (Vogelaar & Seiler 2012: 20). The present study profits of the study of comparative-historical linguistics and typological studies, concentrating on contemporary Colloquial Finnish.

There has happened an innovation in the very core area of Finnish grammar: a person suffix has been replaced by another one in verbal conjugation, and as a consequence, encoding of object has changed in certain transitive constructions. Change of an ancient person suffix –*mme* ‘1PL’, originating from an agglutinated free personal pronoun *me* ‘we’, to a relatively new one is in itself a major event in the history of Finnish language, which has preserved many of the characteristics reconstructed into Uralic Proto languages. As a result of the new inflectional ending, another previously unexisting pattern has become general in colloquial Finnish: occurrence of a Nominative object in a construction with a Nominative subject, see examples (1) and (2).

- (1) Conservative pattern, Standard Finnish  
(Me) *osta-mme auto-n*.  
(we) buy-1PL car-ACC  
‘We will buy a car.’
- (2) Innovative pattern, Colloquial Finnish  
*Me oste-taan auto*.  
We buy-IMPERS car  
‘We will buy a car.’

It is assumed that the reason for the change in alignment pattern lies in the fact, that not only personal suffix is replaced by the suffix of impersonal conjugation, but the alignment pattern of impersonal construction is inherited as a whole. In other words, the new person conjugation of 1PL is based on impersonal construction with its characteristics in encoding object. The asymmetry found in non-canonical object marking has no semantic ground. It is morphosyntactically unexpected, as in these constructions the Subject and the Object of Transitive constructions are encoded in Nominative, which is an encoding pattern found nowhere else in the Finnish.

The present study discusses how the change 1PL > 1PL’ has affected the Finnish grammar, from the viewpoints of complexity and asymmetry. The diachronical process is sketched on the basis of data from vernacular, thus making a reference to dialectal typology and demonstrating how vernacular can and should be employed in diachronical typology. Evidence from sister languages, Carelian and Veps, in which Impersonal has extended to 3PL conjugational paradigm, is applied as complementary source.

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This paper examines the differential evolution of the Absolute Construction (AC) in the history of the Germanic languages (with a focus on English and Dutch). The AC (well known from Latin (1)) is a non-finite construction consisting of a (pro-)nominal head and a predicate that can be structurally realized in various ways (participle, NP, AdjP, AdvP, PrepP). ACs are typically unaugmented (2) but can also be augmented (introduced by a preposition) (3) (Kortmann 1991: 11).

- (1) *Nam mox redeuntibus domum nuntiis, exercitum ... colligit copiosum, ...*  
(Bede, *Historia Ecclesiastica*, 2.12)  
For soon while the ambassadors were returning home, he raised a mighty army...
- (2) The kidney being a discrete organ, there was every chance that the cancer had been contained. (BNC, 1989)
- (3) And here he was with his eyes burning bright. (BNC, 1989)

While ACs were widespread in the early Indo-European daughter languages (Bauer 2000: 285-286), their use has become limited in several of the Present-day descendants of these languages, in that the range of predicate types has been reduced, augmentation has become increasingly obligatory and overall frequency has plummeted (Hernández 1996: 471; Komen 1994: 29; Kortmann 1988: 69). This was especially the case in all the Germanic languages (Kortmann 1995: 189-192; Killie 2006: 451) with English as the notable exception (Kortmann 1995: 189).

The purpose of the present paper is to identify the reasons why the English AC managed to remain relatively frequent and productive (even in spoken language (van de Pol 2012)) while in the other Germanic languages the construction has fallen into disuse. The following factors which may have facilitated the presence of ACs in English but were lacking in the other Germanic languages are examined:

- i) the fuzzy boundaries (resulting from with-augmentation) between ACs and the more frequently used (regular) prepositional postmodifying constructions (e.g. *a box with a glass panel on top*) and gerunds (e.g. *he does things without me knowing it*); other Germanic languages are restricted to the first type of overlap
- ii) the overall higher frequency of non-finite constructions with ing-forms such as gerunds and free adjuncts in English vis-à-vis other Germanic languages
- iii) the complex periphrastic verb-phrases containing present participles (e.g. *have been working*) which were absent in other Germanic languages (compare Dutch *\*zijn werkende geweest*)
- iv) the semantic generalization of English ACs beyond the purely adverbial into the quasi-coordinate (Killie & Swann 2009: 337) domain, which allowed the AC to functionally differentiate itself from finite subordinate adverbial clauses (van de Pol & Cuyckens 2013), while serving as a denser, more backgrounded alternative to regular coordination patterns

The research presented is corpus-based, resulting from a diachronic analysis of 9621 ACs from 1500-1994 taken from corpora such as PPCEME, PPCMBE, BNC, the Leuven Drama Corpus and the Old Bailey Corpus. Comparisons with Dutch will incorporate data from DBNL, the 38 Miljoen Woorden Corpus and the Digital Compilation Corpus Historical Dutch; comparisons with other Germanic languages will largely be drawn from the available literature on the topic.

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