

## Construction theoretic approaches to grammar: Lessons for Syntax from Word-based Morphology

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Over the past few years there has been increasing evidence for the status of *constructions* in grammar as emergent phenomena requiring analysis as holistic entities on their own: as participants in networks (= morphological paradigms and inventories of phrasal types) of similar whole entities, rather than as epiphenomena resulting from the simple combination of constitutive parts. Both words and clausal constructions can be viewed from this perspective as *recombinant gestalts*.

As the empirical evidence for constructions expands in different research domains (linguistics, psycholinguistics, language acquisition) there has been an accompanying increase in proposals concerning what counts as construction-theoretic proposals of grammar, i.e., adapting the notions of Ackerman & Webelhuth 1998 and Culicover & Jackendoff 2005 what the appropriate "toolkit" for construction-theoretic approaches should consist of. Consider the following illustrative data from German:

1a.. Active resulative predicate:

Sie hat	die Schuhe	<b>krumm</b>	<b>gelaufen</b>
she has	the shoes	crooked	walked

'She has walked the shoes crooked.'

1b. Passive resulative predicate:

Die Schuhe	sind	von ihr	<b>krumm</b>	<b>gelaufen</b>	<i>worden</i>
the shoes	are	by her	crooked	walked	become

'The shoes were walked crooked by her.'

1c. Adjectival derivate:

Die	krumm}	gelaufenen	Schuhe	zieht	sie	nicht	mehr	an
the	crooked	walked	shoes	wears	she	not	more	part

'She doesn't wear the shoes any more that she walked crooked.'

As argued in Ackerman and Webelhuth 1998, given certain standard lexicalist assumptions, the complex predicate **krumm laufen** 'to walk flat' is best interpreted as a lexical construction, with a periphrastic surface exponence consisting of two independent words. We argued, following such construction-theoretic morphological proposals as Bochner 1993, that morphology is basically pattern-based, that words are realizations of content rather than incremental compositions of morphemes, and that it is an unwarranted stipulation (adopted in both lexicalist and non-lexicalist theories) to restrict the domain of the morphological/lexical component to only synthetic (= single) wordforms. Indeed, morphological approaches based on languages like English that insist on all words being

synthetic do not scale up to phenomena in a host of other languages where morphological paradigms contain both synthetic and periphrastic forms e.g., the papers in Ackerman et. al. 2007.

Simplifying somewhat, we hypothesized certain criteria for determining the lexicality of an entity. In particular, if e.g., meaning changes and valence changes are solely lexical and cannot be effectuated by syntactic context, then the fact that **krumm laufen** is transitive while **laufen** is not argues straightforwardly for its lexical nature. What we referred to as a *lexical combinatorial item*, accordingly, may receive multi-word surface expression in syntactic constructions: since it is lexical it can serve as the source for passivization, in (1b), or as the base for category-changing derivational morphology, in (1c). This entails the identification of a lexical component and a phrasal component, as well as the articulation of principles responsible explaining their interaction. As recognized in that theory, there are lexical constructions and there are phrasal constructions: both are necessary, they interact, and together they partition the grammar.

In this course we will explore what it means to be a lexical and (morphological) versus a phrasal construction. What are the similarities and what are the differences between these distinct, but interacting domains? The guiding assumption will be that aspects of the traditional (pre-structuralist and pre-generative) Word and Paradigm model of inflectional and derivational morphology (see Matthews 1972, Aronoff 1994, Anderson 1994, Stump 2001, Booij 2005) provide crucial insights into the necessary toolkits for grammatical theory. In line with this we will exam various contributions to a resurgent word-based perspective on morphological theory. This, of course, will entail detailed examination of morphological systems in various languages. Complementing this focus on morphology, we will examine a particular syntactic phenomenon, specifically, a prenominal relative clause construction which presents a challenge to all syntactic theories: while all present theories can describe the properties of this type of relative (with more or less stipulation to their basic assumptions), none either predict it nor explain it. Following the analysis and arguments in Ackerman, Nikolaeva (and Malouf) we will explore the hypothesis only a construction-theoretic approach with access constructions within networks of multiple inheritance hierarchies provides hope for a descriptively and explanatorily adequate analysis of this type of relative clause. Throughout we will keep in mind issues of how construction-theoretic approaches fit within the context of current research in cognitive-neuroscience.

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