



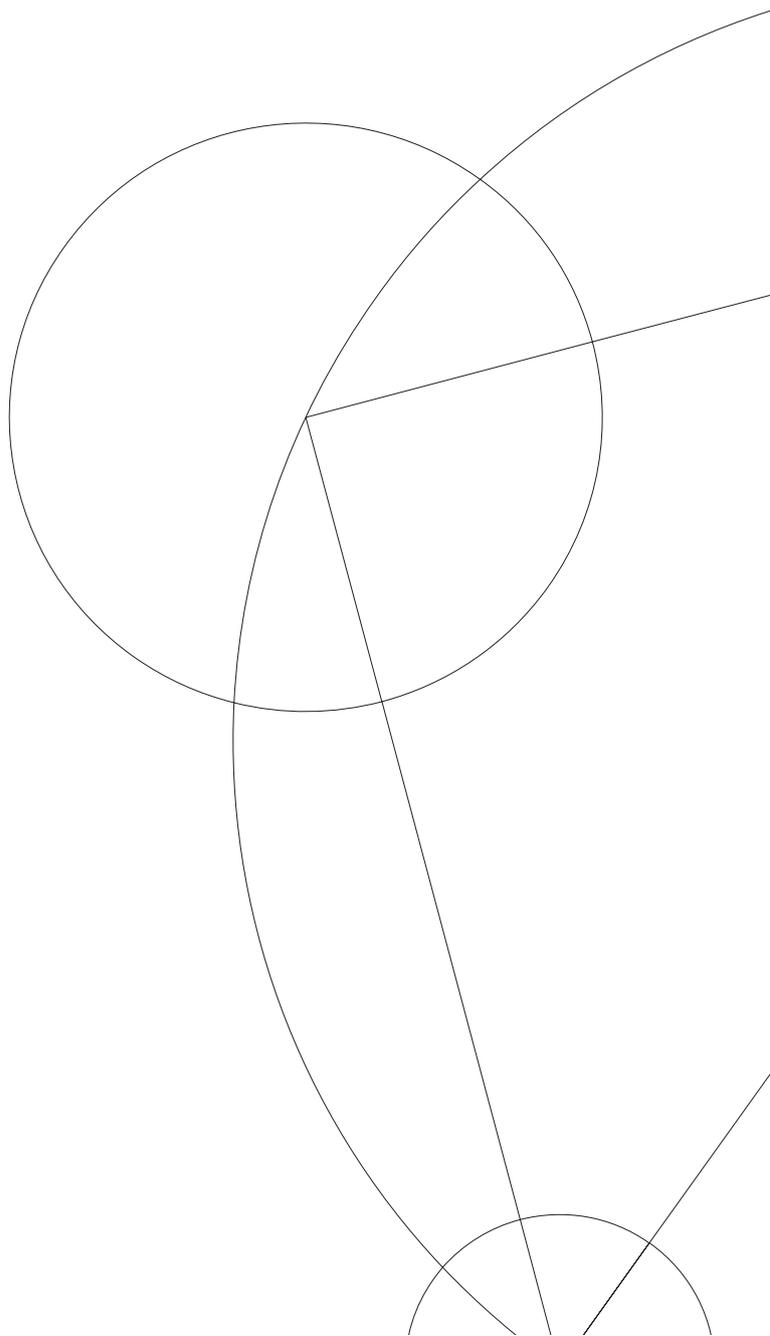
Substance and structure in linguistics

Workshop at the University of Copenhagen,
February 27-28, 2015

Sponsored by the Department of Nordic Studies and Linguistics

Programme and abstracts

Venue: University of Copenhagen, Njalsgade 120, Copenhagen, room 22.0.11
From Nørreport or Kongens Nytorv: metro station Islands Brygge (direction: Vestamager)
From Rådhuspladsen: bus lines 12 and 33



Workshop on Substance and Structure in Linguistics, Department of
Nordic Studies and Linguistics, University of Copenhagen
27th-28th February 2015 – Programme

Friday

- 8:30-9:50 Registration
8:50-9:00 Opening
9:00-10:15 Martin Haspelmath: *Reconciling substantialism and structuralism*
- 10:15-10:45 coffee/tea
- 10:45-11:15 Evelien Keizer & Elnora ten Wolde: *Structured Substance: The case of the Binominal Noun Phrase in Functional Discourse Grammar*
11:15-11:45 Joseph Davis: *Substance and Structure in Columbia School Linguistics*
11:45-12:15 Klaas Willems: *The universality of categories and meaning: A Coserian perspective*
12:15-12:45 Lobke Ghesquière & Kristin Davidse: *A Hjelmslevian take on structure and substance: from descriptive to focusing mere and merely*
- 12:45-14:00 lunch
- 14:00-14:30 Diana Forker: *Current approaches in typology and the substance/structure distinction*
14:30-15:00 Jessie Leigh Nielsen & Kasper Boye: *Aspect, semantic mapping and substance-based crosslinguistic descriptive categories*
15:00-15:30 Pernilla Hallonsten Halling: *Prototypical adverbs: From comparative concept to typological prototype*
- 15:30-16:00 coffee/tea
- 16:00-16:30 Phillip G. Rogers: *Defining 'substance' in crosslinguistic studies of parts of speech*
16:30-17:00 Eva van Lier: *Flexible lexical categories in Oceanic languages and beyond*

Saturday

- 9:00-10:15 Peter Harder: *Substance(s) and the rise and imposition of structure(s)*
- 10:15-10:45 refreshments
- 10:45-11:15 Elisabeth Engberg-Pedersen: *Converging evidence in characterising content substance*
11:15-11:45 Jan Anward & Per Linell: *Languaging and emergent language – putting the form vs. substance distinction upside down*
11:45-12:15 Peter Juul Nielsen: *Internal structural indexing and its relation to content substance*

- 12:15-12:45 Yoshikata Shibuya & Kim Ebensgaard Jensen: *Usage, structure, and substance in the English ditransitive construction: Testing Hudson's (1992) hypotheses with quantitative methods*
- 12:45-14:00 lunch
- 14:00-14:30 Olga Kuznetsova & Daria Mishchenko: *Verbal systems of Mande languages: A substance-based approach in the intra-genetic typology*
- 14:30-15:00 Marlou van Rijn: *The grammaticalization of substance and structure in possessive person marking*
- 15:00-15:15 coffee/tea
- 15:15-16:30 William Croft: *Construal, substance and structure*

Abstracts

Jan Anward & Per Linell

Languageing and emergent language – putting the form vs. substance distinction upside down

The distinction between *form* (or structure, system) and *substance* (material aspects, behaviour) was much discussed in the structuralist era of linguistics (Saussure, Hjelmslev etc.). Meta-theoretically, structuralism assumed that the essence of language was structure (symbol systems) and not situated actions. Language system (form) was unquestionably seen as prior to "language use".

Now, many language theories have turned to interactionism. This has presupposed (or entailed) important perspective shifts. The nature of language is now attributed to (inter)activities (actions, 'languageing') rather than abstract symbols (the latter being partly attributable to a 'written language bias'), and language systems are seen as emergent from, rather than underlying, languageing. This implies a respecification of the time-honoured form-versus-substance distinction: it is not about language units vs realisations any more, but about constraints on utterances vs the utterance actions themselves.

If the language system is no longer the primary matter (but languageing is), what remains of language structure? We suggest that there are currently three positions on this issue:

- (i) not much remains: exemplary utterances are the basis of language knowledge (Becker, 1995; Coulter, 2005, Lavie, 2003);
- (ii) middled position: abstractions are tied to concrete utterances (utterance types): grammatical constructions. Despite divergences within theories of Construction Grammar (Hilpert, 2013), this meta-theory is at the same time maximalist and minimalist; we have a lot of knowledge about specific constructions (rich memory; Bybee, 2010), but we should restrain our urge to posit abstract structural relations between utterance types, making minimal assumptions of this kind (as regards what participants in languageing need to know; this is then the opposite of the generativist search for maximally general underlying structures and constraints);
- (iii) more of structuralism: despite the fact that people's knowledge builds upon their experiences of languageing, they are assumed to develop extensive 'second-order' systems of language structure.

We intend to give a few examples of how utterance types (e.g. extrapositions, cleft sentences) would be explained "genetically" (developmentally) in interactionist terms, as opposed to how a full-blown structuralist-generativist analysis might have it.

Some will argue that the interactionist argument will amount to presenting the form-substance relation upside-down. We will argue that it involves putting language and linguistics back on its feet.

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William Croft

University of New Mexico

Construal, substance and structure

Grammar is often taken to represent a conceptualization or construal of reality. In cognitive linguistics, the notion of construal has been used in two different ways that have been conflated together. It is argued here that these two ways should be distinguished. In the first case, language - both grammar and lexicon - construes experience, which is what is generally meant by substance. This is the classic notion of construal. Here, both individual language and crosslinguistic evidence imply that experience must be divided into fine-grained situations, and that the mapping between linguistic form and meaning (experience) is a probabilistic one, determined by the affordance of each situation type for alternative construals. In the second case, it has been argued that grammatical constructions (structure) "construe" the meaning of the content words that occur in those constructions. There is considerable flexibility in the "construal" of word meanings when they occur in different constructions. But this is quite different from classic construal. The meanings of grammatical constructions are image schemas that are combined with the meanings contributed by words. Words have a purport or potential to be used in different grammatical constructions. The image schemas are not imposed by the grammatical constructions, since the latter are themselves compatible with different image schemas (i.e. are polysemous); further evidence for their polysemy is found in crosslinguistic variation in the combination of image schemas with content words.

Joseph Davis

Substance and Structure in Columbia School Linguistics

Diver (1974), while claiming a direct intellectual line back to Saussure, at the same time faulted Saussure and his successors Trubetzkoy, Jakobson, Hjelmslev, and Chomsky for eliminating substance from linguistics and over-emphasizing value, or what we might call structure. According to Diver, Saussure's insistence in the *Cours* (1916) that *la langue* is a system of *valeur pure* appeared to be justified by nineteenth-century preoccupation with substance and by Saussure's own insight that certain linguistic problems could be solved with no appeal to substance.

Particularly, Saussure (1878) had proposed—based entirely upon structural relations, not phonetic substance—that the Indo-European parent language must have had a series of consonants whose unknowable phonetic substance had entirely disappeared from the known daughter languages. Only with the discovery of Hittite, a quarter-century later, was Saussure's proposal supported by evidence of phonetic substance. Grammar too received a Saussurean corrective: For instance, rather than an uncontrolled proliferation of notional “uses of the cases,” the linguist should let *la langue* itself establish what oppositions are relevant. Thus, in both phonology and grammar, Saussure's successors promoted structure as the only thing of importance and relegated substance to fields outside linguistics proper. In Diver's view, Saussure's “antithesis”—pure structure—quickly “led to difficulties . . . as insurmountable as those of the thesis”—pure substance.

Diver argued that both substance and structure have their place in linguistics. Diver proposed that substance is required in phonology in order to account for the distribution of consonants in the lexicon and in grammar in order to account for the distribution of case morphology in texts. Diver's account of the favoring in the lexicon of voiceless over voiced obstruents appealed to the need for the language-user to control only one articulator—oral—in the former but two articulators—oral and laryngeal—in the latter. Diver's account of the distribution of Latin nominal cases appealed to the semantic substance of “degree of contribution” by the given participant to the activity represented by the verb.

The need for both structure and substance is seen as well in an analysis of the Italian pronominal clitic *si* vis-à-vis its distribution relative to other clitics (Davis, in preparation). The distribution of *si* relative to *ne* reflects an “opposition of value,” or structure, involving the semantic substance of “Focus” on participants in the event represented by the verb: *Si* signals the value inner and *ne* the value outer within the substance of Focus. The distribution of *si* relative to *gli* and *lo* reflects an “opposition of substance,” whereby *gli* and *lo* signal grammatical meanings having to do with the substance of “Degree of Control” over the event while *si* lies outside (or “opts out of”) that substance. Straightforward quantitative measures will be provided in support of this claim.

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Elisabeth Engberg-Pedersen

Converging evidence in characterising content substance

Characterising substance in cognitive-functional linguistics is a slippery business. Boas (1911, in Slobin 1996) suggested that there is a complete concept, a prelinguistic mental representation from which each language samples its structured concepts. But as pointed out by Slobin (1996), in language use it cannot be the case that we have a prelinguistic “full” image of an event, including everything that might be expressed in any language, and from which we pick just those aspects that are needed for our language. To some extent we are oriented to those aspects of objects and events that ‘(a) fit some conceptualization of the event, and (b) are readily encodable in the language’ (Slobin 1996: 76). On the other hand, language change via meaning extension indicates that we perceive events in alternative ways independently of our language (Croft 1999). Languages themselves thus point to how substance should be characterised. But methodologically this presents a risk of circularity: we study languages to characterise the conceptual substance that is carved out by the content structures of individual languages, and we argue for particular analyses of linguistic content structure by referring to conceptual substance. To avoid this methodological problem we need converging evidence for specifications of substance (Langacker 1999).

One place to look for converging evidence is the language use of individuals who, on independent grounds, are characterised as having a deviant conceptual structure. People who are diagnosed as being on the autism spectrum are characterised as having difficulty understanding that other people may have a different conception of a situation than their own, that they may have a so-called false belief, or people with autism may be less oriented to this fact (e.g., Baron-Cohen, Leslie & Frith 1985; for alternative views, see Bowler 2007, Hobson 2002). Studies of the language use of people with autism may present converging evidence for analyses of linguistic perspective and substantiate such analyses. In my talk I shall present results from studies of children with autism. Compared with children with a typical development, children with autism use, for instance, more (Evans 2012) direct speech than indirect speech in narratives. A preference for direct speech may be explained by the children’s difficulty with holding two perspectives in mind at the same time. Their problems with indirect speech substantiate the analysis of the constructions as perspective mixing.

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Diana Forker

Current approaches in typology and the substance/structure distinction

There is an obvious difference between describing and/or analyzing an individual language and comparing languages thereby searching for cross-linguistic similarities. Within functional linguistics this distinct shows up in various ways. Haspelmath (2010), for instance, argues that therefore we must keep our terminologies separate and differentiate between terms used for language-specific categories (*descriptive categories*) and terms for cross-linguistic categories (*comparative concepts*). The distinction between potentially universal *substance* and language-specific *structure* points in a similar direction.

Taking this distinction as starting point, the talk will analyze how the two opposites relate to each other. How does structure link with substance? And with respect to Haspelmath's distinction, how well do our comparative concepts fit the data from specific languages? In recent years we have seen at least two opposite approaches in typology:

1. bottom-up: from data/languages/structures to comparative concepts/substance
2. top-down: from comparative concepts/substance to data/languages/structures

The first approach is explicitly advocated by Bickel & Nichols (2002), Bickel (2010), Bickel et al. (In Press) under the name of Autotypologizing or multivariate analysis, etc. The second is promoted by Canonical Typology (cf. Corbett 2005, Brown, Chumakina & Corbett 2013).

The aim of the talk is to discuss the two approaches with respect to their very different premises and methodologies (e.g. for Bickel frequency and statistical analysis are inherent parts of the typological enterprise while Canonical Typologies relies on our ability to identify canonical instances even in cases where these are rare and could, at least in theory, even be non-existent) and with respect of how exactly language-specific and cross-linguistic terms/categories/concepts/data are linked. In a second step, I will discuss what these approaches tell us about the substance vs. structure opposition.

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Pernilla Hallonsten Halling

Prototypical adverbs: From comparative concept to typological prototype

While adjectives and their potential universality have been much debated (Dixon 1977, Wetzer 1996, Stassen 1997, and Dixon & Aikhenvald 2004), adverbs remain rather neglected in the typological and cognitive literature. Unlike adverbs, adjectives have been viewed as comparative concepts, thus Haspelmath (2010) uses „adjective“ as an example of a comparative concept with the definition that it “is a lexeme that denotes a descriptive property and that can be used to narrow the reference of a noun” (2010: 670). Despite their low profile within typology, it has been suggested that adverbs ought to be included for a more complete cross-linguistic picture of parts of speech (e.g. Croft 2001, Haser & Kortmann 2006).

Accordingly, in the present study, adverb is addressed as a comparative concept: an adverb is a lexeme that denotes manner and that can be used to modify a verb. When such an approach is employed, clear adverb subtypes along the lines of Dixon’s (1977) semantic types of adjectives emerge, leading to the question of whether a clear boundary can be drawn between comparative concepts and objective types.

This talk focuses on languages with non-derived adverbs that are used to modify verbs, or that show clear unmarkedness patterns (cf. Croft 2001) in the same function. Examples are drawn from a sample of 60 unrelated languages from all continents, with data collected primarily from reference grammars. The sample is based on a combination of selecting languages with relevant adverbial structures and achieving as much genealogical diversity as possible. The relevant constructions have been identified by examining how property words or manner notions are encoded when functioning as modifiers of predicates.

The results show that although there are diverse structural possibilities in this function, in terms of different adverbial constructions of varying spread and productivity, there are also non-derived adverbs in unrelated languages, even in some cases where adjectives cannot be found. These non-derived adverbs seem to fall into certain semantic types, such as speed and value (two of Dixon’s (1977) types for adjectives). Yet other languages, that do not display non-derived adverbs, such as Swahili and Lezgian, show unmarkedness patterns in this function for types such as speed and value. Although structural diversity is both expected and found, there is thus a tendency for certain property words to be unmarked when functioning adverbially. Unmarked items of the speed and value types are here argued to instantiate prototypical adverbs. This implies that verb modification is more independent of noun modification than what has commonly been assumed, if the use of comparative concepts is extended to the study of adverbs for the identification of a cross-linguistic adverb prototype. Moreover, these findings call for a thorough discussion of how comparative concepts relate to objective typological prototypes.

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Peter Harder

Substance(s) and the rise and imposition of structure(s)

The distinction between substance and structure is one of the centrepieces of European structuralism – and also part of the heritage of Danish functional linguistics. In order to preserve the valid point of the distinction in a functional framework, however, a major reconstruction is required.

The presuppositional relationship must be reversed (structure presupposes substance rather than the other way round), and substance in a linguistic context must be understood as function-based: language does not structure ‘the world’, but a universe of functional options (for communication). Further, it is necessary to distinguish between different structures as well as different substances: Both substances and structures differ depending on whether the object of description is a language as an aspect of community life (the system, or ‘langue’), language in the individual mind (‘competency’, with a –y), or language as usage. One result of this reconstruction is that the dichotomy between usage and structure disappears (usage can remain usage and still be structured, although not in exactly the same way as the system or individual competencies). Another consequence is that systematic forms of variation become part of the language system, rather than excluded from it.

Finally, the account offers a perspective on the relationship between bottom-up and top-down dimensions of structure in a usage-based and functional framework.

Martin Haspelmath

Reconciling substantialism and structuralism

Modern usage-based linguistics and classical structuralism seem to be polar opposites – the former accounts for language structure on the basis of substance and performance, while the latter relies entirely on abstract patterns without regard for substance or use. However, it is difficult to deny that both approaches have made important contributions to our understanding of language. I will therefore discuss their merits and limitations and will ask in what way they could be reconciled with each other.

Re-interpreting Saussure's (1972) view of the linguistic sign as a pairing of expression and content, Hjelmslev (1961: Ch. 13) proposed that the 'content' plane divides into a 'content-substance' and a 'content-form'. The semantic purport, which transcends specific languages, is coded into a specific content-substance by the lexicogrammatical structures of a language, its content-form. This entails Bolinger's (1968: 27) tenet that "a difference in form spells a difference in meaning", i.e. the Principle of NO Synonymy of Grammatical Forms. It also entails that the formation of new linguistic signs, which is criterial to changes such as grammaticalization and subjectification, should be part of a semiotic account.

As a test case, we will take two grammatical structures which seem to have largely the same purport, viz. the focusing use of adjectives (1)-(2) and adverbs (3)-(4). They have a discourse-organisational function, focusing on elements in relation to alternative values, typically countering expectations and presuppositions in the discourse context. For this paper, we restrict ourselves to English focusing *mere* and *merely*, which can both express exclusive focus ('only'), (1)-(3), as well as inclusive focus ('even'), (2)-(4) (König 1991, Nevalainen 1991).

- (1) *how hard it proved to cram 12 whole quatrains into a mere four hours.* (WB)
- (2) *the excitement I would feel at the mere anticipation of a visit to the old Empire Theatre.* (WB)
- (3) *Does this prove Freud was right? No. Merely that he is often misinterpreted.* (WB)
- (4) *The new rules of air fighting were being made up with each clash. To succeed, merely to survive, required an adaptability that was found chiefly in the young.* (WB)

To get access to the distinct 'content-substance' of these two focusing constructions, we will chart the syntagmatic and paradigmatic shifts in their 'content-forms', as they developed diachronically.

They derive from dependency structures whose representational meaning is assembled compositionally (Langacker 1987, McGregor 1997): (i) adjectival modifier *mere* ('pure') - nominal head, as in (5), (ii) verbal head - adverbial modifier *merely* ('purely'), as in (6).

- (5) c1390 *a mer vois* (OED)
- (6) c1449 *R. Peacock Forto speke pureli and mereli of dyuynyte* (OED)

In its re-analysis from descriptive modifier of the head (5) into focusing element, *mere* came to function within the determiner zone (Bache 2000). With reference to McGregor (1997: Ch. 8), we will argue that qua content-form such determiner complexes do not relate compositionally to the head (and any descriptive modifiers) but to the whole NP, which they 'scope' over. Viewing the relation between - simple and complex - determiners and NP as obtaining between a scoping and a scoped over unit avoids the problems which both their traditional analysis as premodifiers and Hudson's (2004) controversial one as heads incur. Qua content-substance the focusing element may apply either to the nominal referent (2) or to its absolute size (1). Focusing *merely* resulted from the reanalysis of adjunct (6) into subjunct (Quirk et al 1985: 448), via a similar change from compositional dependency to scoping structures (McGregor 1997: 223), enclosing focal values ranging from predicate (4) to proposition (3).

On the basis of diachronic corpus study, we will reconstruct the changing networks of the structures with focusing *mere* and *merely* and the ways in which these have been lexically and collocationally filled in over time. Particular attention will go to the development of their scopal potential. With *mere* we expect the narrow scope on absolute quantities to be a later development. For the adverbial we will investigate whether there is a similar narrowing (cf. Traugott 2006) or rather a gradual widening from predicate (typically expressed by infinitive or gerund) to proposition.

Whilst our lexicogrammatical analysis incorporates layering (Hengeveld 1989), we strive for a more explicit account of structural assembly, as in McGregor's Semiotic Grammar (1997). This analysis not only seeks to identify the units and the order of assembly that account best for the semantics (Langacker 1987), but it also accords 'semiotic significance' (McGregor 1997: 47) to different *types* of syntagmatic relations. On this rich view, syntagmatic structure is conceived of as primary in the content-form and the schematic semantics it codes are primary in the content substance.

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Jessie Leigh Nielsen & Kasper Boye

Aspect, semantic mapping and substance-based crosslinguistic descriptive categories

The assumption that structure is language-specific and substance potentially universal entails a view of crosslinguistic descriptive categories like tense, aspect and evidentiality as grounded in semantic substance. Under this view, a crucial step in identifying crosslinguistic descriptive categories is to establish a substance-based tertium comparationis for the description of language-specific values and clusters of values. One way to do this is to set up a number of “comparative concepts” (Haspelmath 2010): conceptual generalizations like ‘time’, ‘past’, ‘present’ and ‘future’, designed by the linguist to describe substance values. Most often, this is all that is done. When identifying descriptive categories, linguists tend to stay content with conceptual generalizations. Bybee in fact makes a point out of staying content with them. She argues that crosslinguistic categories are not descriptively relevant: while they may be reflected in language-specific structure (e.g. tense paradigms), most often they are not (Bybee 1985: 17). Accordingly, Bybee & al. (1994) use category names and conceptual generalizations like ‘evidential’ and ‘source of information’ merely as convenient meaning labels, without any implication of possible categorial status. In a similar fashion, Haspelmath (2010) stresses the subjective character of comparative concepts, describing them as “constructs” (Haspelmath 2010: 666) that “cannot be right or wrong”, but only “more or less productive, in that they allow the formulation of more or less interesting subdivisions and generalizations” (Haspelmath 2010: 678). According to this view, there is not only no guarantee that conceptual generalizations actually describe coherent areas of crosslinguistic, semantic substance, it is not even possible to constrain or evaluate them.

This paper advocates a more optimistic and less subjective approach to crosslinguistic descriptive categories. Based on Boye (2010, 2012), it first argues (pace Bybee) that there are at least three ways in which crosslinguistic conceptual generalizations can be relevant for the description of language-specific structural phenomena, and thus (pace Haspelmath) that language-specific structure can be used to evaluate conceptual generalizations. One way has to do with semantic mapping: it is argued that a conceptual generalization – e.g. ‘time’ – is relevant for crosslinguistic structural description if, in a semantic map, each of the comparative concepts – e.g. ‘past’, ‘present’, ‘future’ – covered by the generalization is linked by a connecting line to at least one other concept covered by the generalization. Thus, semantic-map continuity is proposed as a criterion for upgrading pure conceptual generalizations to crosslinguistic descriptive categories in the sense of conceptual generalizations that are significant for the description phenomena found in geographically and genetically distinct languages.

Subsequently, the application of this criterion is exemplified in a crosslinguistic analysis of aspect. Following the same practice as van der Auwera & Plungian (1998) in their analysis of modality, a semantic map of aspect is constructed based on data from 76 languages extracted from Bybee & al. (1994). It is demonstrated that aspect does not show semantic-map continuity and can thus not be regarded as a crosslinguistic descriptive category. The paper ends by stating possible reasons for the results and discussing theoretical and practical consequences for further studies.

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Peter Juul Nielsen

Internal structural indexing and its relation to content substance

By examining the content analysis of a nonfinite verb form in Danish, the so-called supine, the presentation addresses the question of how to account for a substance-structure relation in cases where a linguistic item, such as a grammatical morpheme, has a function best described as an instruction (cf. Harder 1996: 107-115, 214-223) that concerns structure-internal organisation. Such a function deals with the internal composition of a syntagmatic whole (e.g. a clause) and the relations between different content components of this whole, and in doing so it makes reference to other co-present elements, but without any obvious link from language-internal structure to extra-linguistic substance.

The point of departure is the case of the Danish supine (often, but incorrectly identified with the perfect participle, cf. Hansen & Heltoft 2011: 204-205). This nonfinite form is used in several different syntactic constructions, the primary ones being the perfect tense construction (1) and the periphrastic passive construction (2).

- (1) hun har køb-t bogen
she have.PRES buy-SUP the.book
'she has bought the book'
- (2) drengen bliver drill-et
the.boy become.PRES tease-SUP
'the boy is being teased'

In the analysis of the function of the supine morpheme *-(e)t*, i.e. its content contribution, it is problematic to point out a semantic specification that lends itself to association with a domain of content substance. Although sometimes suggested (cf. Christensen & Christensen 2005: 109), it does not specify 'retrospectivity', as witnessed by the atelic periphrastic passive in (2), but seems entirely dependent on the interplay between the supine verb form and its contexts of usage. Rather than opting for the solution to call the supine morpheme semantically empty, which is dissatisfactory from a functionalist as well as a classical European structuralist point of view, the content of the morpheme can be described within a Peircean semiotic framework (cf. Anttila 1975, Andersen 1980, 2008). The supine morpheme has indexical function and points to (a) the set of auxiliary verbs and constructional options that specify whether the verb enters into perfect tense construction, passive construction or something else, and (b) the specification of voice, which is strikingly absent in the supine verb form itself (cf. the voice inflection of other Danish verb forms and of the supine in Swedish). In this way the supine form provides a structure-internal instruction, but without – in itself – having a content coding that can be described as a structuring of meaning substance in any obvious way.

In addition to raising questions about the possible substance link in structural instructions, the presentation will discuss how the concept of (structure-internal) indexicality – which plays an important role in a number of contemporary analyses and theories (cf. Gaeta 2004, Andersen 2008, Nørgård-Sørensen et al. 2011) – tallies with the assumption that the coded content of a given language, although a matter of system-defined structure, is based on content substance and to be understood as a linguistic shaping of this substance.

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Evelien Keizer & Elnora ten Wolde

Structured Substance: The case of the Binominal Noun Phrase in Functional Discourse Grammar

This talk will present, on hand a corpus study of the English Binominal Noun Phrase (e.g. an idiot of a doctor; Aarts 1998; Keizer 2007), a Functional Discourse Grammar perspective on the nature of substance; in particular it will consider the distinction between conceptual structure and speaker intention in relation to the formal structures encoded by the language.

Functional Discourse Grammar (FDG; Hengeveld & Mackenzie 2008), the successor to Simon Dik's Functional Grammar, is a functional theory in the sense that it is based on the assumption that (both historically and in actual use) function triggers form: FDG "takes the functional approach to language to its logical extreme in that 'pragmatics governs semantics, pragmatics and semantics govern morphosyntax, and pragmatics, semantics and morphosyntax govern phonology'" (Hengeveld & Mackenzie 2008: 13). This view is reflected in the top-down organization of the model: taking as its input a speaker's communicative intentions, a cognitive process of formulation occurs which translates these intentions into two functional representations (one containing pragmatic, the other semantic information); in turn, these representations form the input to a process of encoding, which determines the morphosyntactic and phonological form of the utterance (e.g. Hengeveld & Mackenzie 2008: 39).

The overall architecture of the theory clearly illustrates the theory's stance on the relation between conceptualization and grammar: although (potentially universal) conceptual information triggers language production, this information is not regarded as being part of the grammar, which only represents those (language-specific) aspects of a speaker's intention that are formally expressed in the language in question. Moreover, the assumption that pragmatic and semantic information (directly or indirectly) determines the (morphosyntactic and phonological) form of an utterance clearly indicates that the model's primary concern is with the combinatorial aspects of language production. In this way, the theory makes it possible to analyse and compare categories and constructions cross- and intralinguistically, to reflect (subtle) differences between (superficially) similar constructions and to trace changes in the functional (semantic and pragmatic) and formal features of a construction.

To demonstrate the potential of the model and the way in which it deals with function (as "structured substance") and form ("encoded substance"), and in particular with the relation between them, we examine the distinctive grammaticalization path of one particular form of the Binominal Noun Phrase as the first noun evolves into an evaluative modifier (e.g. a beast of a Hollywood year [COCA]) and an intensifier (e.g. a beast of a good time [Google-US]). These linguistic phenomena are of particular interest in this discussion because their intensifier and evaluative modifier functions and nominal form position them in a fuzzy region between categories, making it difficult to find direct relations between their pragmatic/semantic function and their form. Therefore, based on corpus data from the Corpus of Contemporary American English (COCA) and the Corpus of Historical American English (COHA), the paper will focus on the categorization of the grammaticalized types of the Binominal Noun Phrase and the theoretical implications of the Functional Discourse Grammar perspective on the link between substance and form.

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*Verbal systems of Mande languages: A substance-based approach in the intra-genetic typology*¹

Mande languages is a geographically compact group of languages spoken in West Africa. Regardless of the numerous intra-familial contacts and genetic affinity of these languages, their grammatical systems demonstrate numerous specific features in the organization of the grammatical categories. This fact makes Mande languages a highly interesting object for intra-genetic typology.

One of the most prominent features of verbal systems in Mande languages is the vague border between the fully grammaticalized (mandatory) constructions forming the core of the verbal system and numerous constructions which are not fully grammaticalized. The functions of the constructions of both types partially overlap and therefore these constructions can not be analyzed separately. In the meantime, there is a strong concurrence between formally and semantically similar non-fully grammaticalized constructions. For example, in Mwan (Southern Mande), the meaning of the Immediate Future can be conveyed by a construction with one of the verbs of motion: «X goes/comes to the place of action P» = ‘X is about to commit the action P’ (Perekhval'skaya 2014).

Many verbal constructions expressing the same gram types have analogous formal structure in different Mande languages, though they do not ascend to the cognate lexical source. The number of cognates in the grammatical structures of Mande languages is surprisingly low for such a degree of genetic affinity, which may be a result of different choices between multiple concurring periphrastic constructions made by a particular language in the grammaticalization process. This choice determines the further development of the grammatical semantics of the construction. Thus, differences in the functioning of fully-grammaticalized constructions may be seen as the traces of their lexical source. It accords with the idea of the dependence of the semantic substance on the grammaticalization path (Bybee 1988; Bybee et al. 1994).

As an illustration of this correlation, we will present the main results of the project aimed on the integral comparative analysis of verbal systems in Mande languages which is carried out actually. This project implies the description of verbal systems of particular languages according to the common scheme and their subsequent comparison. Such an analysis is supposed to reveal the logic of the emergence of the observed distinctions and similarities in the organization of TAM-systems in these languages.

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Defining ‘substance’ in crosslinguistic studies of parts of speech

This paper first presents a new illustration of the prototype structure of parts of speech, a study that qualifies as a substance-based crosslinguistic comparison. Then it provides a discussion of the problems with the substance and structure dichotomy in light of the results of this study. Parts of speech have been explained as prototypes that emerge from the use of broad semantic classes of words—objects, properties, and actions—in basic propositional speech acts of discourse—reference, modification, and predication (Croft 2001). This theory predicts that each of these broad semantic classes will be typologically unmarked in its prototypical propositional speech act and relatively marked in other propositional speech acts. Yet, a prototype implies a continuum of more and less prototypical members. While the difference between propositional speech acts is categorical, the broad semantic classes of objects, properties, and actions represent a continuum based on the semantic primitives of relationality, stativity, transitoriness, and gradability (Croft 2001). As a result, we would expect to find differences in prototypicality *within* each broad semantic class, as well as languages making different decisions on where to draw word- class boundaries on this semantic continuum (e.g., states as either properties or actions).

Building on previous studies in semantic classification (Silverstein 1976; Comrie 1989; Dixon 1977; Wetzler 1992; Stassen 1997; Vendler 1967; Levin 1993; Croft 2012), I chose 50 lexical items—such as ‘boy’, ‘tree’, ‘red’, and ‘break’—to represent various subclasses of objects, properties, and actions. Grammars, dictionaries, and elicitation were used to collect data on how these lexical items are encoded in each propositional act, controlling for semantic shift. Markedness patterns were identified based on the structural coding and inflectional potential (Greenberg 1963; Croft 2003) of each lexical item in each speech act relative to the other lexical items in the study. This analysis was conducted for twelve geographically and genetically diverse languages. Multidimensional scaling (Croft & Poole 2008) was used to illustrate the data spatially. Clustering patterns in the spatial analysis reveal the degrees of prototypicality both across the three broad semantic classes as well as within each one, confirming the hypotheses.

The use of only two labels—substance and structure—risks confounding two separate translations of information that occur from experience to linguistic form. The first of these translations is the perception and cognitive organization of the experience. In this step, substance is the experience itself as perceived by the senses, while structure is the cognitive organization of that information based on previous experiences. The Pear Stories (Chafe 1980) and other similar experiments were aimed at starting from this experiential baseline. The second translation is that from cognition to linguistic form. In this step, the cognitively organized information could be viewed as substance (source), and linguistic form as structure. This second translation is the domain of the parts of speech study presented above.

In the study, the lexical item ‘angry’ was found in many different forms crosslinguistically, corresponding to the English examples *angry* (property), *be angry* (state), *get angry* (process), and *anger* (abstract object). This reflects that there are many different construals of the ‘anger’ experience. The lexical target (considered substance in this study) is not primitive; rather, the experience is. Furthermore, language users are forced to choose a particular construal of an experience in order to talk about it, because speech acts are categorical. Functional-communicative pressures shape the structure of discourse, and that structure then imposes a choice of construal on the language user.

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Yoshikata Shibuya & Kim Ebensgaard Jensen

Usage, structure, and substance in the English ditransitive construction: Testing Hudson's (1992) hypotheses with quantitative methods

In a paper on the 'double-object', or ditransitive, construction Hudson (1992) proposes a set of hypotheses in support of a claim that monotransitive objects (T-OBJ) and ditransitive direct objects (D-OBJ) should be conflated into the same syntactic functional category. In the perspective of usage-based linguistics (Kemmer & Barlow 2000), there are several problems with Hudson's account of the ditransitive construction. Firstly, it is based on introspective acceptability judgments by a limited number of native speakers rather than on observation of actual usage-patterns in naturally occurring discourse. Secondly, Hudson treats the ditransitive as a functional monolith, assuming functional uniformity and ignoring possible functional variation. Thirdly, his analysis is primarily based on formal structure and pays very little attention to semantic structure let alone conceptual substance. His conflation of the T-OBJ and D-OBJ categories is based on syntactic operations and the atomist assumption that both object types express the same semantic participant role. However, if one considers the scenarios encoded by monotransitives and ditransitives (Rasmussen & Jakobsen 1996: 103-105), the participants associated with T-OBJs and D-OBJs are non-uniform (Hopper and Thompson 1980, Goldberg 1995, Croft et al. 2001: 583-586). Unlike Hudson's (1992) syntactic account, a symbolic account would categorize the two types of objects as distinct and construction-specific syntactic functions.

Drawing on data from *ICE-GB* and applying some quantitative methods, we empirically test Hudson's hypotheses in the perspective of contemporary usage-based construction grammar (e.g. Bybee 2013). For example, a comparison of D-OBJs and T-OBJs in *ICE-GB* suggests that, even in a purely structural perspective, the two objects are considerably different. A distinctive collexeme analysis (Gries & Stefanowitsch 2004) further suggests differences at the level of conceptual content. Hudson (1992: 266-268) observes variation in the functionality of D-OBJs depending on the verb, such that, unlike those occurring with *give* and *deny*, D-OBJs occurring with *peel* take on a more adjunct-like function, but gives the construction the monolithic treatment. We argue that such variation may be reflective of different underlying exemplars, such that there may be functionally and semantically distinct D-OBJ types.

Structure *and* substance must be taken into account if one is to understand the ditransitive and its syntactic constituents. We will also address the extent to which context-specific information of the type that contemporary usage-based linguists would consider *bona fide* constructional knowledge, such as register-specificity and various types of association-patterns (Biber et al. 1998: 5), interrelates with substance and structure. For instance, a multiple distinctive collexeme analysis along the lines of Schönefeld (2013) suggests different register-specific verb-construction attraction patterns in the ditransitive. This seems to indicate register-specific variability in canonicity of symbolic structure. In other words, our analysis seems to suggest that conventional encoding of substance in the ditransitive is register-sensitive.

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Some Oceanic languages have been claimed to lack a distinction between major lexical categories of verbs, nouns, and adjectives (e.g. Mosel & Hovdhaugen 1992 on Samoan; Jones 1998 on Mekeo). These claims are based on the observation that in these languages lexemes denoting actions, objects, and properties can all be used, without any formal adaptation, as predicating, referring, and modifying expressions. While the language-specific nature of lexical categories is widely recognized among functional typologists (see e.g. Cristofaro 2009, Haspelmath 2007), the complete lack of major word class distinctions, especially between nouns and verbs, remains a controversial issue (Evans & Levinson 2009).

This paper comprises a detailed investigation of lexical categorization in 25 Oceanic languages, spread over all sub-groupings of the family. More specifically, it assesses the morpho-syntactic (or *structural*) behavior and functional distribution of a set of 25 semantically defined groups of lexemes. These groups are meant to cover the types of *substance* typically assumed to fall under ‘nouns’ (e.g. lexemes denoting persons, body parts, or artefacts), ‘verbs’ (e.g. states and actions), and ‘adjectives’ (e.g. dimensions, values, or colors). For each of these groups, in each of the 25 languages, I documented (a) their freedom to occur – with or without formal adaptation such as a nominalizer or copula – in the function(s) of predication, reference and/or modification, and (b) their possibilities to combine with various grammatical categories associated with these functions, such as determiners, case and adposition marking, person, number, and TAM.

Analysis of this data set shows a spectrum of variation in the degree and type of flexible categorization across the Oceanic language family. Flexibility can be measured along a number of dimensions: (i) semantic types of lexeme groups, (ii) types of grammatical categories, and (iii) types of pragmatic functions. Also, the overall lexical flexibility of an individual language can be qualitatively and quantitatively assessed; in some languages all lexeme groups have ‘free’ access to all pragmatic functions, be it with subtle restrictions on the expression of grammatical categories; in other languages only some combinations of semantic groups and pragmatic functions are flexible, and again in others no lexeme groups may be used without special marking in pragmatic functions that do not match their semantic meaning.

In short, this study shows that while lexical flexibility is certainly quite pervasive across the Oceanic language family, it is also strongly variable, gradable, and subject to functionally motivated restrictions. In addition, the situation in the Oceanic languages is compared with accounts in the literature of other language families with flexible lexical categories, such as Mayan, Tupi-Guaraní, and Munda (e.g. Lois & Vapnarsky 2006, Peterson 2014). This study thus provides a data-driven and multivariate assessment of the debate about major word class distinctions in Oceanic languages in particular, with implications for cross-linguistic comparison in general.

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Marlou van Rijn

The grammaticalization of substance and structure in possessive person marking

A domain of linguistic research in which the distinction between substance and structure plays an important role is grammaticalization. This study is specifically concerned with the grammaticalization of free possessive pronouns into bound agreement markers. This development is characterized, on the one hand, by a loss of substance, namely the functional transition from an independent referential expression to a marker without any referential potential. On the other hand, possessive person markers lose structure through the formal transition from a word to a fusional form via affixation and clisis. A presumed major factor in the grammaticalization of possessive person marking is the presence of an (in)alienability split, i.e. the use of dedicated marking for possessed nouns that are inherently related to their possessors, like kinship terms and body parts (inalienable), versus possessed nouns that are not (alienable). Across languages with such a split, inalienable possessive marking is claimed to be (i) less referential and (ii) less formally independent, than alienable possessive marking (Nichols 1992: 117-122, Haiman 1983: 793-795, Haspelmath 2008: 18-22). However, these claims have never been investigated independently, as the substance-structure distinction in (possessive) person markers is often collapsed. This paper seeks to fill this void.

First, I investigate claim (i) and (ii) separately, by examining possessive person markers in a worldwide sample of 40 languages with an (in)alienability split. Referential potential is measured independently of formal expression type by applying a four-part typology of person markers (Hengeveld 2012). This typology straightforwardly determines the referential potential of so-called ‘pronominal affixes’: person markers that are traditionally considered ambiguous between a pronoun and marker of agreement (cf. Siewierska 1999, 2004: 120-127; Corbett 2003: 169-170).

Secondly, I determine the nature and strength of the relationship between substance and structure, by investigating the pairing of referential potential and formal expression type in each possessive marker. Such a relation is often presupposed in grammaticalization theory, where it is commonly claimed that a loss in referential potential coincides with a loss in morpho-phonological independence (Bybee et al. 1994: 21, Lehmann 1982: 236, Haspelmath 1999: 1050)

My results confirm both claims (i) and (ii): inalienable possessive person marking shows at least the same degree of referential potential and morpho-phonological independence as alienable marking, and is often less referential and less independent. Unlike explanations in terms of frequency (Haspelmath 2008), iconicity (Haiman 1983: 793-795, Croft 2008) and discourse accessibility (Ariel 2000), I argue that this asymmetry is essentially semantics-based: since the presence of a possessive relationship is inherent to the meaning of the inalienable noun, it is in less need of expressive marking than alienable nouns. Furthermore, both within and across individual languages, less referential markers minimally show the same degree of morpho-phonological independence as more referential markers, and often a lower degree. This finding suggests that substance and structure co-evolve, but only in a relative sense.

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Klaas Willems

The universality of categories and meaning: A Coserian perspective

CONTEXT:

With studies such as Haspelmath (2007; 2010), a number of differences and similarities between the ‘old’ structuralist paradigm and current cognitive-functional accounts have gained renewed attention and significance in the theory of language and linguistics. Central topics in the debate are the status of linguistic categories and concepts, whose universal validity is called into question by Haspelmath (cf. also Evans & Levinson 2009), and the role of linguistic meaning as a *tertium comparationis* in cross-linguistic research.

RESEARCH QUESTIONS:

Haspelmath’s insistence on the difference between non-universal, language-specific categories and universally applicable (“analytical”) comparative concepts raises a number of important questions, among which the two following ones:

- i/ What is the relationship between language-specific categories and comparative concepts commonly used in contrastive linguistics and language typology (cf. Newmeyer 2010)?
- ii/ How do we identify the “level of meaning” (Haspelmath 2007: 128) at which meanings are said to be cross-linguistically comparable and commensurable (cf. also Haspelmath 2003)?

METHODOLOGY:

To answer these questions, it seems particularly interesting to compare Haspelmath’s position with the point of view expressed by Eugenio Coseriu (1921-2002) in his writings on linguistic universals, levels of meaning, parts of speech and the theory of linguistic analysis (Coseriu 1977, 1985, 1987, 1992, 2004, 2007). Coseriu is widely considered as a major representative of a linguistic tradition informed by European and American structuralism, whose shortcomings he claimed to overcome not only by drawing on philosophical work (Aristotle, Hegel, among others) but also by introducing both a typologically adequate (“Humboldtian”) and an integrative functional view on language.

RESULTS:

On the one hand, Coseriu distinguishes three different types of “universal” categories and concepts, ranging from conceptual universality over rational necessity to empirical generality. This allows him to account for the conceptual universality of notions such as CASE, SUBJECT/OBJECT, Thematic Roles (AGENT, RECIPIENT etc.), parts of speech (e.g., the distinction between VERB and ADJECTIVE), etc., without however implying that these notions apply to all languages. As well as paying particular attention to the use – and limits – of category assignments in linguistic descriptions of grammatical highly dissimilar languages (compare, e.g., Coseriu’s discussion of the passive construction in German, Romance languages and Japanese), Coseriu’s approach offers an avenue to relate language-specific and comparative categories and concepts. On the other hand, Coseriu distinguishes different types of meaning, depending on whether meaning is expressed in discourse/texts, is encoded in the signs of a specific language or presupposed as part of the common encyclopedic and pragmatic knowledge speakers possess. Under this view, languages are semantically commensurable on the level of the content of discourse, which is translatable, as well as the level of inference, which is based on shared knowledge, broadly construed, yet each language has to be considered as unique on the level of language-specific meanings.

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