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Plenary Talks

Bošković, Željko (University of Connecticut):

On the nature of language and linguistics: it's all just linguistics

The talk will discuss a number of general issues regarding the nature of language, which supersede the so called “formal” and “functional” approach dichotomy, and will discuss phenomena where syntactic, semantic, and prosodic issues are all relevant, in fact in ways which also bear on language acquisition and language change. The discussion will underscore what it takes to be a syntactician investigating the nature of language these days: linguistic phenomena need to be looked at in their totality, not compartmentalized by specific subfields, with the empirical domain of inquiry expanded to investigations of understudied languages and especially broad typological investigations. In other words, what it takes is to be a Linguist (with capital L).

Fortuin, Egbert (Leiden University):

Explanation in syntax: incommensurability between functional and generative theories?

Within linguistics there are several theories which deal with syntax. A general division can be made between Chomskyan generative syntactic theories (for example Chomsky 1995) and various functional syntactic theories such as Construction Grammar (e.g. Goldberg 1995), structuralist theories such as Universal Semantic Syntax (Fortuin & Geerdink-Verkoren to appear), Functional Discourse Grammar (Hengeveld & Mackenzie 2008), and various descriptive theories (see for example Beedham 2001 for this term). This paper addresses the question (i) to what extent these theories and their explanations deal with the same type of phenomena, (ii) to what extent they use the same concept of a successful explanation and (iii) to what extent they are incommensurable in the sense of Kuhn (1962).

Explanation essentially deals with providing an answer to a why-question (Skow 2016). I will argue by illustrating this with linguistic examples that because of the different theoretical starting points of the two types of theories (generative versus functional) the ‘why’ questions that have to be answered within each (type of) theory differ greatly. More specifically, whereas functional theories of syntax are interested in questions that deal with form and meaning (linguistic signs), this is not the case or at least less central in generative syntax. The difference between the theoretical starting points also means that what counts as a unified explanation or as a deep explanation for similar phenomena differs greatly between the two theories. On the one hand, within a functional syntactic theory an explanation which links syntax to semantics (i.e. explain syntax in terms of semantics) provides a deeper and therefore better explanation. This is not the case for generative syntax, which tries to abstract from semantics, and which posits innate syntactic rules and/or non-explicable syntactic rules, where functional theories may explain the same phenomena with reference to semantics. Within sign-based functional theories, however, an explanation which does not refer directly or indirectly to observable elements or structures is seen as a bad explanation.

On the other hand, within generative grammar, an explanation which links visible (surface structure) and reconstructed (deep structure) syntactic phenomena to one another without reference to semantics, and which refers to the simplest imaginable procedures that generate unboundedly many meaningful expressions considering the relevant observed phenomena, is the best explanation (e.g. Berwick et al 2011). This is, however, not necessarily the case for functional syntax, which may provide a different explanation for syntactic phenomena that can be explained in terms of semantics or information structure within the synchronic structure, and for syntactic phenomena which have no semantic explanation at all, and which may for example be explained in terms of diachronic terms and/or by referring to grammar external factors such as general cognitive capacities such as processing effort (see for example Yngve 1961; Gibson 1998 and van Trijp 2014 for an analysis of linguistic complexity and processing efforts). From a generative theoretical perspective, such explanations are less unified, and therefore less successful.

In sum: what counts as a good explanation in a functional theory is not seen as a good explanation in a generative theory, and the other way around. I therefore conclude that generative theories and functional theories and their explanations are incommensurable in the sense of Kuhn, which explains why there is generally little discussion between the different syntactic paradigms, or discussions which do not lead to a change of the theoretical positions (see for example Adger 2013 for such a discussion).

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Haspelmath, Martin (Max Plank Institute for the Science of Human History, Jena):
Forget “formalism/functionalism”: How to resolve the tension between naturalist
and culturalist explanations in linguistics

In this talk, I will discuss some phenomena in the area of clitic and impersonal constructions
in Slavic languages, but my main focus will be methodological. I claim that much confusion
can be clarified by making two distinctions:

general linguistics vs. theoretical linguistics

naturalist explanation vs. culturalist explanation

Linguists can seek explanations (= theoretical accounts) both at the general level and at the
language-particular level. The latter have limited scope but are often all we can achieve because
the phenomena are accidental at the general level.

The explanations can be naturalist (appealing directly to human nature) or culturalist (appealing
to general principles of human culture that are only indirectly related to human nature). This
distinction applies to all kinds of phenomena that have been discussed in behavioural biology
and anthropology. For example, an explanation of marriage or house-building might appeal
directly to human nature (a “marriage instinct”, or a “house-building instinct”), or to properties
of human cultures. Specifically, one might argue that human cultures are adaptive, in the sense
that cultural features that help populations thrive will tend to be deeply engrained in cultures
and passed on faithfully to successive generations. Thus, marriage and house-building might be
explained as adaptive features of human cultures.

I argue that the clearest opposition in linguistics is between naturalist explanations (appealing
to innate categories) and culturalist explanations (appealing to convergent cultural evolution
and functional-adaptive forces). “Formalism” and “functionalism” are unclear concepts that do
not elucidate the current de facto schism in linguistics. By contrast, an early commitment to
naturalism can explain the practice of generative linguistics, and I will argue that naturalism
should be appealed to only as a last resort – just as a “house-building” instinct should be posited
only if no other explanation is available.

Kosta, Peter (Potsdam University):

Towards a Formal vs. Functional Typology of Diathesis and (Anti-) Causatives in Slavic languages

The present talk will give a short overview of constructions closely related to transitivity and intransitivity and known under the cover term passives, impersonal versus personal passives and causatives vs anticausatives. My work on unergativity and unaccusativity (Kosta 2010; 2011, 2015, 2017ab; Kosta & Krivochen 2014; Krivochen & Kosta 2013) will comply this approach. It will be shown that the constructions need a three level approach of description and a simple UG principle which computes them. We will consider both, core and peripher structures in Slavic languages as we already did in Kosta (1992). The three levels are modularly interconnected but "function" in their own right, namely in an autonomous independent working space. The division of labor between the syntactic and semantic interfaces is not an axiom but rather a thesis supported by neurolinguistic and biolinguistic evidence of computation (cf. Kosta, in print). The three levels of minimal computations (serving economy principles) and maximal derivations (following the infinite state models of language, cf. Chomsky Hierarchy in 1957 cf. Krivochen 2017) are the following: The Level I - Syntax which consists of two simple operations: external Merge and internal Merge (Move). While external Merge comes free, internal Merge is triggered by Valuation of unvalued functional features modulo Probe and Goal checking. The Level II Propositional Semantics gives (i) conditions on saturation of the external argument x modulo predication and Lambda Conversion, and (ii) determines scope of Quantifiers and Negation to its variables at LF. The Level III describes and determines the Hierarchical ordering of Theta-roles assignment by the predicate to their arguments in A-positions. In the last part of the talk, the dimensions of event semantics (including aspect and actional semantics in the sense of the classification in Vendler: states, actions, accomplishments and achievements) will be analyzed. We assume that a formal approach can easily be transferred to a functional approach on the basis of description but not on the basis of predictive power.

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Mukherji, Nirmalangshu (University of Delhi):
Sound of Thoughts

All works on language assume a certain basic design feature of language. Language is viewed as a system of sound-meaning correlation. So the design is such that there is a thought part and there is a sensorimotor part. Human languages are distinguished in that these two parts are somehow put together. The task of a theory of language thus is to suggest explanatory models in which this design feature is predicted for each construction in each human language. This design feature has also motivated some researchers, such as Chomsky and Berwick, to propose a 'divide and rule' policy: language basically concerns (structuring of) thought, sound is 'ancillary'.

We develop some preliminary considerations to suggest that the Chomsky-Berwick proposal is radically false. There is no thought without antecedent sound/gesture. Sound/gesture gives the 'body' to thought; sound/gesture enables thought to come to being, so to speak. If time permits, a range of consequences will be sketched.

Di Sciullo, Anna Maria (Université du Québec à Montréal, New York University):
A Formalist Approach to Interface Asymmetries

A theory is explanatory to the extent that it provides simpler analyses of linguistic phenomena than alternative theories. The simpler analyses usually make empirical predictions in different syntactic domains and have consequences for linguistic theory, viz. the theory of inner language. Going beyond explanatory adequacy, formalist explanations bridged to their biological basis offer a deeper understanding of human's capacity for language. The biological endowment for language is necessary for the growth of language in the individual. Language acquisition and contact between languages give rise to language variation and change. Principles of efficient computation narrow down the form of convergent derivations and their interface with the external systems, conceptual and sensorimotor. We focus on interface asymmetries brought about by the silence of functional heads in DPs, including coordinate DP structures, e.g. John Paul and Mary, but not *John and Mary, Paul, complex numerals, e.g. twenty one in English, but *unus et viginti* (Lit. one and twenty)/*viginti unus* in Latin, interpreted as the same natural number, as well as time telling expressions, where functional heads are silent in English, e.g. one forty five, but not in Italian *l'una e quaranta cinque* (Lit. the one and forty five) and *un quarto alle due* (Lit. a quarter to the two) describing the same point in time, but from different perspectives. We show that a formal approach to interface asymmetries, in conjunction with principles of efficient computation, including Asymmetry Maximizing principles, such as derivation by phases, and principles Minimizing Externalization, such as Spell-Out conditions on pronunciation, make correct predictions for the pronunciation/silence of the functional heads in these structures. The proposed analysis will be shown to be simpler than alternative analyses, thus providing explanatory insights. As predicted, the analysis extends to the properties of other functional projections, including locative PPs, where the prepositional head is silent in some languages, including English, Slavic, e.g. Russian *во* (here), *там* (there), and Modern Italian *qui* (here), *lì* (there), but not in other languages, including Latin, e.g. *ad hic* (Lit. at here), *ad locum* (Lit. at/to there) and dialects spoken in Central Italy, e.g. *(a)ecche* (Lit. at here), *(a)lloche* (Lit. at there). We contrast the proposed formal approach to interface asymmetries and the silence of heads to a functional approach to these asymmetries. Under a functional approach, variation and change arise under communicative or cognitive circumstances and prevail under sociolinguistic circumstances. Under the formalist approach, system internal properties and economy conditions are at play in syntactic derivations and interface asymmetry effects. To its merit, the formalist approach enables fine grained analysis of specific linguistic phenomena, as well as it offers means to distinguish what is system internal and specific to narrow syntax from what is not, but nevertheless modulates the derivations of linguistic expressions and their interface properties. Going beyond explanatory adequacy, results from brain imaging suggest that the silence of functional heads, and their consequences for the distribution of their dependents, may provide further insights on the role of points of structural asymmetry in a deeper understanding of language.

Regular Talks

Bunčić, Daniel/ Prenner, Maria Katarzyna (University of Cologne):

A prerequisite for agentivity research: The competition of arb constructions in Polish

Modern Polish has three grammaticalized arb constructions: a 3pl impersonal as in (1), a reflexive impersonal as in (2), and the so-called -no/-to construction, which historically goes back to a passive participle but is nowadays an active impersonal past construction, as in (3):

- (1) Na zebraniu mówi-l-i o naprawie dróg.
at meeting talk-pst-3pl.mp about repair streets:gen
'At the meeting they talked about street repairs.' (Doros 1975: 81)
- (2) Na zebraniu mówi-l-o się o naprawie dróg.
at meeting talk-pst-3sg.n refl about repair streets:gen
'At the meeting they talked about street repairs.'
- (3) Na zebraniu mówio-no o naprawie dróg.
at meeting talk-pst.imprs about repair streets:gen
'At the meeting they talked about street repairs.'

Since these constructions are synonymous, it is important for our research to know when to use which, because we need this knowledge to be able to construct valid experiments. Furthermore, when analysing agentivity features, we need to be able to rule out those factors that influence the choice of construction rather than being part of the prominence relation we are interested in.

Consequently, we have conducted an acceptability judgement test in which all three constructions were presented in contexts with colloquial vs. formal style, past vs. present tense, perfective vs. imperfective aspect, and specific vs. generic reading of the implicit subject. We will present the results of this study and its consequences for our further research.

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Grković, Jasmina (Novi Sad University):

The Origin of “Quirky Subject” Constructions (Slavic in Indo-European Perspective)

The paper discusses the origin of the so-called “quirky subject” impersonal constructions in Slavic, on the material of old Slavic languages (Old Church Slavonic, Old Czech, Old Russian, Old Serbian). Such syntactic patterns, witnessed by various Indo-European languages, have attracted the attention of many linguists in the past 150 years. Since their undergoer is not expressed by the canonical nominative subject in modern Indo-European languages, they have presented a great challenge in various syntactic theories.

Early Slavic had an accusative and several types of dative “quirky subject” constructions. They are all marked by denoting an experiencer, subjected to a certain physical or emotional state, having little or no control over it: OSerb. *boli3sg meAcc* ‘I ache’, OCS *xoštetъ3sg jemuDat* ‘he wants’; *mъnitъ3sg miDat sęrefl* ‘it seems to me’, *potrěbaNom miDat jestъ3sg* ‘I need’, etc., or being modal: *něstъ3sg namъDat ubitiInf* ‘we should not kill’ etc. The same models are found in other IE languages, e.g. the Slavic accusative construction corresponds to Lat. *puđet me* ‘I am ashamed’, Lith. *skaust manę* ‘I ache’, etc.

We argue that “quirky subjects”, which do not belong to the canonical syntactic structure of a nominative language type, are “syntactic archaisms”, belonging to an earlier system of a different typological profile. PIE was a non-nominative, non-configurational, semantically aligned language. The rise of transitivity led to the formation of the nominative, syntactically aligned, configurational systems. A part of this process was the development of grammatical, nominative subjects. In the course of the gradual syntactic reconstruction of IE languages the once canonical constructions with non-nominative undergoers were either replaced by nominative patterns (e.g. OEng. *himDat ofhreow* > Eng. *heNom felt sorry*), gave quasi-transitive constructions (e.g. Eng. *it hurts me*), or (being atypical) were preserved as marked patterns, which is the case in Slavic.

Gvozdanović, Jadranka (University of Heidelberg):
Changes of Aspect and tense systems

Time in language is one of the most discussed topics, of interest to various frameworks and models. This paper discusses tendencies and constraints observed in historical changes of temporal categories, and capacity of the different language models (formal, functional and poststructuralist) to explain language change and account for typological differences.

Janić, Katarzyna (University of Leipzig):

A functional explanation of the contrast in coding self-benefactive and other-benefactive events

This presentation deals with the linguistic notion of benefaction both in individual languages and cross-linguistically. It explores in details linguistic forms employed by a language to code one specific type of benefactive events, the so-called “agentive benefactive events” (Smith 2010). This may involve flagging (i.e. case and adposition), serial verbs, applicativization, etc. The semantic parameter along which agentive benefactives distinguish from other types of benefactive events is the obligatory presence of agentive participant in the development of the event, who intentionally carries out an action for the sake of the beneficiary. Among agentive benefactive events, the coding of two types of configurations will receive closer examination: “self-benefactive events” wherein the agent acts for his own benefit, ex. (1), and “other-benefactive events” wherein the same participant acts for the benefit of somebody else, ex. (2).

(1) Lai (Sino-Tibetan; Smith 1998: 8, 2005: 55)

vanhree	ni?	tsew-maŋ	nam-toŋ	khaa	ʔaa-hman
Vanhree	erg	Ceu.Mang	sword	top	3sg.mm-use

‘Van Hree used Ceu Mang’s sword for himself.’

(2) vanhere ni? vok ʔa-ka-tsok-piak

Vanhree	erg	pig	3sg-1s-buy-ben
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‘Vanhree bought a pig for me.’

While some languages attest one form responsible for coding self- and other-benefactive events (e.g. *ní* in Ma’di [Central Sudanic]), the other languages employ two distinct specialized forms (e.g. *al-* vs. *pir* in Xakas [Turkic]; *-rr* vs. *-marne* in Bininj-Gun-wok [Gunwinyuan]).

In this study, I compared languages from three micro-areas: Africa (5 language families + 1 isolate), Australia (4 language families + 1 isolate) and Eurasia (8 language families), with special attention given to Turkic and Indo-European. An important insight that emerges from this investigation is that the languages that employ two distinct forms to code self-benefactive and other-benefactive events reveal the coding asymmetry. Specifically, the self-benefactive forms tend to be noticeably shorter in length than the corresponding other-beneficiary forms.

In this talk, I will propose the empirical universal that concerns the form of the agentive benefactive marking in simple transitive constructions: In all languages, the benefactive-marking forms employed to express other-benefactive events are at least as long as the benefactive-marking forms employed to express self-benefactive events. The observed universal will be explained within the functional-frequentist approach (cf. Haspelmath 2008).

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Łaziński, Marek (Uniwersytet Warszawski):

Verbal Aspect in Dictionaries. How Does the Entries Order Reflect Functional Principles?

Functionalist accounts to language description must be based on language usage, which had been among others for centuries described in dictionaries. The paper presents a lexicographic reflection of one of the most important and long-lasting changes in Polish and neighbouring Slavic languages: the development of aspect opposition marked with prefixes. The prefixation of German type played crucial role in the development of Slavic aspect. However, the prefixed verbs had expressed first a sole Aktionsart meaning and only much later a correspondence with an imperfective simplex verb (*napisæ* – *pisæ*). The aspect opposition as understood today has only developed between the prefixed or simplex perfective and the secondary imperfective. An important default intermediate stage of this development was an aspectual triple of type (*pisæ* – *napisæ* – *napisywaæ*). Secondary imperfectives and resulting triples have been systematically reflected in dictionaries, but dictionaries have been neglected in the functional approach to aspectology.

The paper presents different types of presenting aspect pairs and triples in Polish dictionaries from the last 250 years against the background of Russian and Czech dictionaries. The description has been evolving from the total independence of two or three aspect partners towards the most popular today's model of merging suffixal pairs together (*przepisæ* –

przepisywaæ) and leaving prefixal pairs (pisaæ - napisæ) connected with cross references only. A full lexical definition is usually given by imperfective simplex verb, however it can be also included in the prefixal perfective verb entry. The development is not fully linear or incremental. The aspect description reflects the tendency to simplification and compactness, from the other side, it must adapt to the recent theoretical findings in aspectology.

Loikova-Nasenko, Tatiana (Charles University, Prague):

Позиция возвратных клитик в древнерусском, современных польском и чешском языках (сопоставительный анализ)

Письменные памятники древнерусского языка показывают, что клитика *са* в древнерусском языке в отношении к глаголу может находиться как в препозиции, так и в постпозиции, причем постпозиция преобладает. На основе этого можно сделать вывод, что в период развития древнерусского языка клитика *са* формально и функционально изначально зависела от глагола и находилась в тесной и неразрывной связи. Однако контекст также показывает, что возвратная энклитика сохраняла и собственное значение как местоимение, указывающее на производителя действия. Подобное преобладание постпозиции возвратной энклитики наблюдается, например, в современном польском языке, однако данная возвратная клитика *się* в нем утратила свое лексическое значение как местоимение. В современном чешском языке возвратная клитика *se* чаще всего находится в препозиции. В отношении к глаголу может находиться на расстоянии одного и более слов не только в препозиции, но и в постпозиции. Можно предположить, что разнообразие этих позиций обусловлено постепенно ослабляемой семантической связью между глаголом и возвратной клитикой *se* на протяжении всего периода развития чешского языка. Этим также объясняется факультативное нахождение клитики *se* при некоторых возвратных глаголах в чешском языке. Отдаленность возвратной клитики от глагола в чешском языке в отличие от древнерусского и современного польского языка показывает, что данная клитика обладает большей свободой и независимостью, хотя и обусловлена своим функциональным значением. Исследование позиции клитик не только в синхронном, но и диахронном срезе может показать историю развития функционального и лексического значения не только возвратных, но и других клитик в современных славянских языках на современном этапе их развития.

Mazzitelli, Lidia Frederica (University of Cologne):

The semantic and discourse functions of Lithuanian reference impersonals

In my talk, I will analyse the discourse functions of three functionally impersonal constructions in Lithuanian: the ‘vague you’ (2SG-IMPS) and ‘vague they’ (3PL-IMPS; Siewierska 2008), and the impersonal passive in *ma/ta* (*ma/ta*-IMPS). These constructions belong to the domain of R-impersonals, displaying a non-topical and non-referential agent (Malchukov & Ogawa 2011). My preliminary analysis is based on a corpus of occurrences taken from different sources (the Lithuanian translation of the novella *The Little Prince*, the short story *Aš mirštu, tu miršti, jis (ji) miršta* by Jurga Ivanauskaitė and some posts on a popular Internet forum).

I will discuss these three constructions with regard to the referential properties of the omitted agent, the properties of the represented event and their discourse functions. Non-referential uses of 2SG and 3PL pronouns have been extensively studied in various languages, but they have been much less investigated in Lithuanian (see Žeimantiene 2005, 2006). As for the *ma/ta* construction, much attention has been dedicated to its morphosyntactic properties, while its discourse functions have often been overlooked (but see Geniušienė 2016).

My analysis shows that the Lithuanian 2SG-IMPS and 3PL-IMPS differ from each other in their referential range, as well as in their discourse functions, with 2SG-IMPS used to construct empathy and 3PL to construct distance. *Ma/ta*-IMPS have the widest range of uses, being able to encode non-referential generic and indefinite agents as well and referential specific agents (even 1SG; Geniušienė 2016); it is mostly used to express distance. As for event elaboration (cf. Sansò 2011), 2SG-IMPS and 3PL-IMPS can express elaborated events, while *ma/ta*-IMPS usually encode little elaborated events.

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Poreau, Bastien (INALCO (Paris) – SeDyL):

Personal and impersonal constructions in Russian: semantical study and comparison of nominative and dative subjects in non-modal and modal utterances

In the Russian language, the syntactic relations between noun phrases in a sentence are marked by their cases. Considering the different types of syntactic constructions and their semantic implications, I will analyze the nominative and dative cases. In Russian as well as in other Slavic languages, the semantic role of the participant is marked by their case agreement (whereas in other languages it won't be necessarily true (for instance, in French, the syntactic role of a noun phrase will be given by his position in the sentence). I will focus on the role of the dative and nominative as "subjects".

In Russian the nominative is often referred as to the non-marked case. This can be explained by the fact, that the semantic role of the nominative fully depends on the type of process (or predicate) he agrees with. On the other side, the role of the dative case in Russian is mainly described as the addressee on a concrete level, see (1) (Zolotova), while the other possible meanings would be derived from this first meaning (2):

1. Pëtr dal Ivanu knigu.
Peter.nom gave.pf Ivan.dat book.acc
Peter gave me a book.
2. Pëtr pomog Ivanu.
Peter.nom helped.pf Ivan.dat
Peter helped Ivan.

It is also known that the dative case is often used to express the idea of experiencer (Filmore, Veyrenc.). In these types of utterances, it is referred to as quirky subject, or semantic subject, etc. In this presentation I will focus on these specific uses and compare them to sentences with a nominative subject.

First, I will analyze and compare a sample of sentences, the first ones, constructed with a personal predicate and a nominative subject (i.e, a real syntactic subject), the seconds constructed with a corresponding impersonal predicate and a dative noun phrase, as in the examples shown below:

3. Emu holodno.
3.sg.dat cold.pred
He's cold (= he's feeling cold)
4. On holodnyj.
3.sg.nom cold.adj.nom
He's cold (his body/his attitude)

This will allow to understand what, on a semantic level differentiate these two constructions as well as the semantic role of these two cases as a “subject”.

Then, I will present some uses of the dative and nominative in modal sentences, i.e with a modal predicate, expressing different shades of (im)possibility or (absence of) necessity. It was shown that the personal modals can express deontic or epistemic necessity (see 5), whereas an impersonal modal can only express a kind of deontic necessity (6):

5. Pëtr dolžen ponjat'.
Peter.nom must.adj.nom understand.pf.inf
Peter has to/must understand.
6. Pëtru nado ponjat'.
Peter.dat has.to.pred understand.pf.inf
Peter has to understand

Or as in these two following examples, where the first personal sentence can express either a permission or a capacity of the subject, whereas the second sentence (impersonal with a dative noun) can only express a given permission:

7. Bol'noj možet vstavat'.
Patient.nom can.ipf.pres stand.up.ipf.inf
The patient can stand up
8. Bol'nomu možno vstavat'.
Patient.dat can.pred stand.up.ipf.inf
The patient can stand up.

During the presentation, I will show and analyze some examples in broad context (most of them taken from the online corpus ruscorpora), and explain what is the impact of the nominative subject and dative noun on a semantical and pragmatical level, considering the different parameters of the utterance: the positions of the speaker and addressee, the type of process involved as well as the type of sentence (affirmative, negative), and modality (possibility/necessity).

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Schlund, Katrin (University of Heidelberg):

Merging vinegar and oil – or how to (not) navigate across frameworks

It is often assumed that frameworks associated with the label formalist (e.g., Generativism) and the various frameworks associated with functionalism (e.g., Cognitive Grammar, Role-and-Reference-Grammar) are mutually incompatible due to their different research foci, methods of data eliciting, and their overall knowledge interests (e.g. Anderson 1999; Delancey 1999).

Despite such seemingly poor preconditions, the present talk tries to single out some potential points of mutual supportiveness from a functionalist perspective. This is done with respect to three illustrative cases: Agreement resolution of quantified subjects in Russian, existential sentences in Serbian, and the stipulation of a zero-subject in Russian transitive impersonals.

As it will turn out, functionalists are well-advised to take generative studies into account, for instance in order to detect rare but nevertheless instructive data (even if these data are difficult to attest empirically). Moreover, the assumption that Generative Grammar does not include semantic and pragmatic factors is not true for a great number of contemporary studies. However, Generative Grammar sets itself apart from the functionalist endeavors with respect to the status that it concedes to semantics, pragmatics, or cultural factors in the formulation of explanations for linguistic phenomena, and in the predictions resulting from these explanations.

Anderson, Stephen R. 1999. A formalist's reading of some functionalist work in syntax. In Darnell, Michael, Edith Moravcsik, Michael A. Noonan Michael, Frederick J. Newmeyer, and Kathleen J. Wheatley (eds.). 1999. *Functionalism and Formalism in Linguistics. Vol. 1: General papers*.

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Delancey, Scott. 1999. Functionalism vs. generativism.

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Segovia Martín, José (Universidad Autónoma de Barcelona):

Great minds don't always think alike: modelling the effect of variant quality on language evolution

In agent based models of language and cultural evolution, variants' intrinsic value can be an important driver of the spread of variants in a population (Fischer, 1958; Gong et al. 2012). When compared with a drift model, content biased populations converge faster in shared communicative conventions (Tamariz et al 2014, Segovia-Martin et al 2018). But agents from the same geographical area (even if they are programmed with identical levels of content bias) may be using different variant quality systems. For example, in a real society, different subpopulations might have developed prestige variants or opposed interests.

We simulate such a situation by creating an independent variant quality system for each subpopulation. Two conditions are examined: heterogeneity and homogeneity. In the heterogeneous condition two independent variant quality distributions are assigned, one for subpopulation one (agents 1 to 4) and another for subpopulation two (agents 5 to 8). In the homogeneous condition, one unique variant quality distribution is used. Heterogeneity increases the rate of convergence during the first generations, until each subpopulation reaches its own consensus, moment from which a steady equilibrium is reached. Homogeneity decreases the speed of convergence in the first generations, but allows subpopulations to reach a long-term consensus, producing a greater decrease in convergence in the long run (Fig. 1).

Our results suggest that is important to take into account the processes that underlie convergence through cultural contact. Our model indicates that the rate of convergence at each moment of the evolutionary process is driven by the interplay between variant quality and individual biases. This implies that a dynamic treatment of variant quality would help a better prediction of language and cultural evolution.

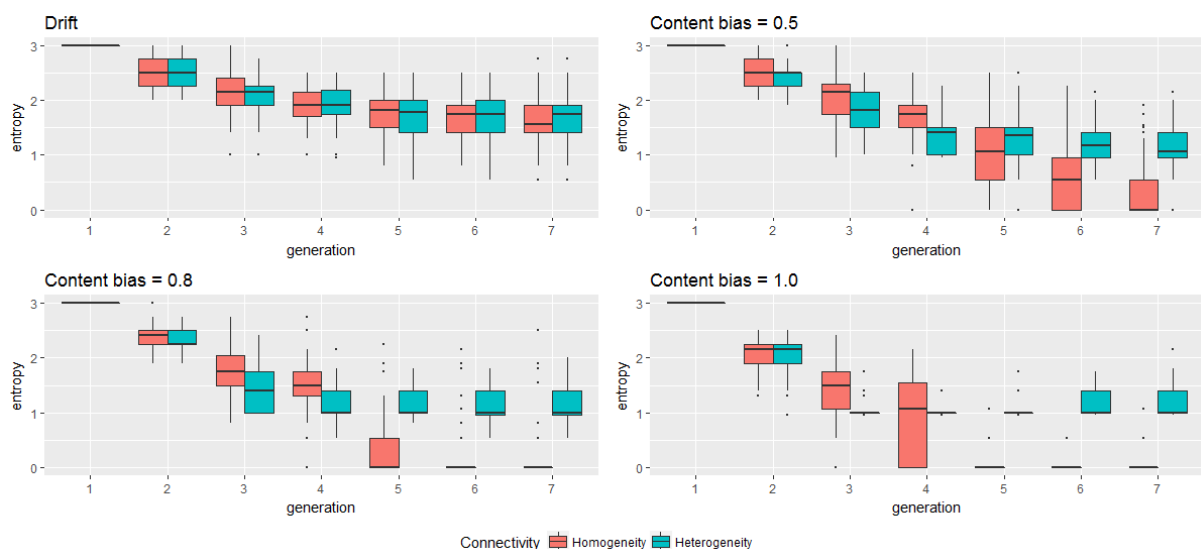


Figure 1.: Convergence by generation by each type of variant quality condition. X-axis represents generations from 1 to 7, Y-axis represents entropy in bits. Drift (top-left), content bias 0.5 (top-right), content bias 0.8 (bottom left), content bias 1 (bottom right)

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Wiemer, Björn (Johannes Gutenberg University, Mainz):

PFV:IPFV-aspect in Slavic: Which changes of scope have occurred, and why there is no upward reanalysis?

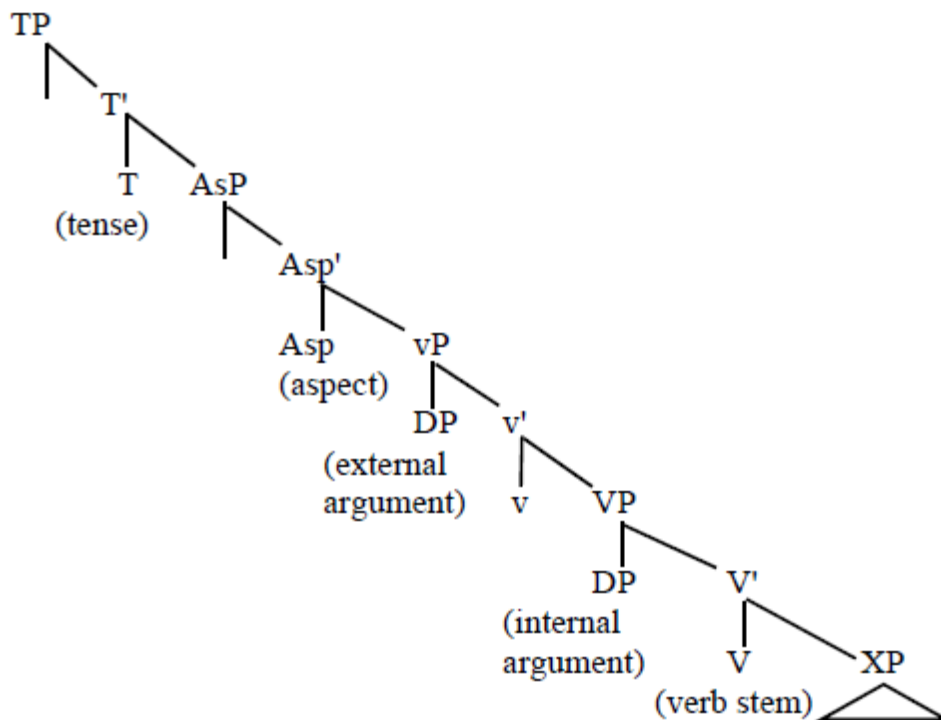
The development of tense-aspect systems has usually been analysed as the rise of inflectional categories based on morphologization clines (cf. Givón 1979). Functionalist theories have exploited such clines in approaches to grammaticalization captured as co-evolution of properties on the phonological, morphosyntactic and semantic-pragmatic level indicating a “loss of the autonomy of the sign” (Chr. Lehmann 2015 [1995]). Most controversial is the role of reanalysis (Haspelmath 1998) and of scope, probably because two notions are seldomly distinguished: in structural/morphosyntactic terms scope is assumed to decrease, while semantic/functional scope is claimed to increase, especially in the TAM domain (e.g., Bybee et al. 1994, Matasović 2008).

Quite ironically, it is primarily generative approaches which have persistently used scope parameters by mapping actionality features and aspect operators on hierarchically organized projections. See Figure 1 from Tatevosov (2015), who even treats certain kinds of prefixes as part of the syntactic composition of actionality. It is questionable, however, that this hierarchical structure can be used as a model able to explain the evolution of the PFV:IPFV-opposition in Slavic languages. First of all, the premise of ‘upward reanalysis’ (Roberts/Roussou 2003, van Gelderen 2004) does not work, since there are no aspect markers as such; instead, the IPFV:IPFV-opposition represents a classificatory, not an inflectional, category (Plungjan 2000: 294; 2011: 53-55; Wiemer 2006; Arkadiev/Shluinsky 2015; Wiemer/Seržant 2017). While this is emphasized by Tatevosov (2016) himself, no difference is made between inflectional and classificatory systems when it comes to determining the place where the aspect operator is attached (namely above vP).

I want to show that, and why, some of Tatevosov’s claims about aspectual composition are at variance with this unified analysis (as representative for formalist approaches), at least when

applied to the Slavic PFV:IPFV-opposition. Above that, I argue that the controversies concerning scope dissolve if the relation between morphosyntactic and functional properties of this opposition is captured in terms of context expansion (in the vein of Himmelmann 2004 and V. Lehmann 1999; 2004), which involves levels that have so far remained unaccounted for in formalist (and other) theories. These considerations will lead to an evaluation of the explanative potential of the aforementioned theories.

Figure 1: Structure of the finite clause



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Zimmerling, Anton (Pushkin Russian Language Institute/Moscow Pedagogical State University/Institute of Linguistics, Russian Academy of Science):
Tendencies. Constraints. Parameters.

The labels ‘formal’ vs ‘functional’ are important for the self-identification of modern linguists and for the polemics between different linguistic schools. The distinction of formal vs functional approaches is essential for selected research issues that can be analyzed in terms of framework-internal explanations. Meanwhile, this distinction is often obscured and dwarfed by two other distinctions — the distinction of linguistic vs philological analysis and the distinction of usus-based vs normative-based models.

The antagonism of linguistic vs philological approaches is a product of relatively recent times. Philologists aim to describe texts as unique objects and to provide them with type characteristics (traditionally — in terms of the genre system, culture-specific concepts etc.). Linguists deal with regular mechanisms realized automatically due to some underlying principles of language structure or to presumably universal systemic relations that hold for all languages and all authors. Standard linguistics explains predicative structures (elementary and complex ones) and their elements and does not dig into text analysis: so called text linguistics i.e. a branch dealing with amorphous text fragments that do not represent any formal paradigm is probably an extension of linguistics but not its proper part. Post-structural theories, different as they are, are opposed to classical structuralism in that they look for external triggers — mathematical, anthropological, social — generating and/or modifying language structure, while for a true structuralist, systemic proportion is a driving force of its own.

Philologists can be further classified into ‘primordial scholars’ and ‘linguistic renegades’. Primordial philologists focus on hermeneutic issues and do not apply to the notions of modern theoretical linguistics. Linguistic renegades, cf. such prominent names as Andreas Heusler, Mikhail Steblin-Kamenskij, Olga Smirnitskaja, Elena Paducheva, adapt part of the linguistic apparatus and develop their own accounts of ‘historical linguistic poetics’, ‘narratology’, ‘oral literature’ etc [Heusler 1923; 1969; Стеблин-Каменский 2003; Смирницкая 1994; Падучева 1996; 2018].¹ There is an intermediate field between linguistics and philology. It traditionally patterns with linguistic research, since it can be formalized in terms of mathematical sciences. ‘Hidden philology’ in linguistics includes a great deal of modern pragmatics, e.g. speech act theory [Austin 1962; Searle 1983] and dialogue models [Grice 1975], cf. [Sidorov et alii 2014]: the classification of speech acts and speaker’s intentions echoes the classification of text genres. The theory of topic-focus articulation [Mathesius 1939] is a bi-product of speech act theory, since different types of topics and foci (rheme) are diagnosed on the basis of question - response pairs, cf. [Bally 1932; Янко 2008]. Moreover, different communicative statuses as well as such parameters of language structure as word order, intonation, use of special morphemes, particles and added syntactic material (e.g. cleft, pseudo-cleft and presentational constructions) link sentences with larger text fragments and discourse contexts [Ковтунова 1976; Lambrecht 1994].

The contrast of normative-based vs usus-based models arguably represents the most important collision in modern linguistics. At the one hand, grammar (and sound system!) is always

¹ A scholar of this type can certainly retain the interest to purely linguistic research and conduct it parallel to philological analysis. This is actually the case with all the above mentioned scholars.

restrictive and constraint-based. It is impossible to tell, whether a given string belongs to language L (i.e. is a well-formed expression $\in L$) or not, without checking the specific set of constraints/rules of GL and consulting the grammatical paradigms/sets of phonemes/ tonemes. At the other hand, intra-linguistic and cross-linguistic variation of parameter values is a normal state of all natural languages and their grammars. In other words, grammatical descriptions must be verified or falsified statistically.

If the corpus/text collection does not show statistically significant deviations from the grammatical standard and these deviations appear to be random, the normative description with minor adjustment holds for the *usus* too, at least in the chosen corpus. If the corpus displays regular and consistent contrast between two or more groups of speakers (say, part of the speakers of L tolerates VS sentences in main clause declaratives, while the others do not, part of the speakers of L assigns nominative case to the object in some position A, while the other part of speakers assigns ergative case in the same position), we deal with the discrepancy of the prescribed standard with the actual *usus* or even with the coexistence of several idioms, ‘dialects’, in the grammar of L.

Recent studies suggest that not only minor and middle-size world’s languages, but also such big codified languages as Modern English and Modern Russian can be successfully described in terms ‘dialectal’ divergences regarding certain parameters of their grammar [Wilson, Henry 1998; Циммерлинг 2018]. The parametric description means that two or more idioms of L differ in the values of the same shared parameter. The fact that the grammar is always restrictive, does not exclude occasional mistakes or deliberate experiments of speakers/authors whose texts are included in the corpus. The corpora are an important research tool, but not a panacea. The grammar can be derived from corpora by application of some models, but these models are not implemented in the frequency figures. Restrictive grammatical rules, e.g. templatic rules constraining the order of clustering clitics [Franks, King 2000; Зализняк 2008; Zimmerling, Kosta 2013] or word-building rules constraining possible combinative of complex adjectives [Vydrin 2018] tell licit combinations of clitics and adjectives from illicit ones: both the positive prediction (what must be found in data) and the negative prediction (what should be ruled out as ‘*’) are relevant for the assessment of models. The problem is that small corpora, like Old Russian Corpus of RNC and even medium-sized corpora like the Bamana corpus [Vydrin et alii 2011] does not always show the attested well-formed combinations (which can be found outside these corpora in other written texts or elicited from native speakers of living languages) and do not always make it possible to check the hypotheses on ill-formed combinations, due to the size limitations. Even large corpora, such as Russian National Corpus (RNC) prove small for certain research tasks. If one e.g. tries to learn from RNC the agreement possibilities of the word ТЫСЯЧА ‘thousand’, all what one gets is ca. 40 examples with QP тысяча X-ов ‘thousand X-s’ in the subject position, which show 3 options: a) the predicate agrees in plural, b) the predicates agrees in singular neuter, c) the predicate agrees in singular feminine. The distribution confirms the hypothesis that all 3 options coexist, but does not tell us whether they coexist by the same speaker and in the exactly the same position regarding word order and communicative status. Neither it tells us, which option is the dominating one. The data size is just insufficient to answer all these questions, and the theorist’s judgments on the acceptability of a), b) and c) can be as weird as the speakers’ judgments. Moreover, the notions of QP (=Quantifier phrase) and grammatical subject are not pre-theoretical or theoretically-neutral either. The phrases like эти тысяча X-ов, and эта тысяча X-ов, with an agreeing pre-quantifier modifier only license options a) and c), respectively, while phrases

without an agreeing modifier license all 3 options a), b) and c). The hypothesis that Russian grammar makes a distinction between the syntactic phrases of QP-level and DP-level (=Determiner Phrase) is definitely theoretically non-neutral, cf. [Лютикова 2018], but it is apparently confirmed both by the elicited examples and the corpora. If it has a valid alternative, it is an explanation in terms of a different hypothesis, but the current distribution of эти тысяча X-в and тысяча X-в must be explained irrespective of the fact, whether the linguist believes in the minimalist program, generalized phrase structure, constituent grammar etc. etc.

The present day linguistic typology is an empirical science. It aims at once at describing the language diversity [Croft 2003] and at predicting it: the notion of predictability plays the crucial role, since the typology addresses the eternal questions ‘why the languages are so different?’ and ‘why the languages are so similar?’. Parameters differ from elementary linguistic features and have a hierarchical structure: they are based on hypothesis how classes of the world’s languages can be grouped [Baker 2008; Лютикова, Циммерлинг 2018]. The critic assessment of the concepts implemented in the parametric typology is a prerequisite of any successful application, cf. [Haspelmath 2010; 2014; 2015]. Meanwhile, the set of such concepts cannot be reduced to the so called comparative concepts i.e. concepts directly based on the comparison of language-specific data. Concepts of general grammar like ‘case’, ‘agreement’, ‘word order’, ‘head’, ‘complement’, ‘clause’, ‘phrase’, ‘morpheme’, ‘clitic’, ‘agent’, ‘patient’, ‘experiencer’, ‘tense’, ‘aspect’, ‘resultative’, ‘perfect’, ‘aorist’, ‘differential argument marking’ etc. are not pre-theoretical and cannot be derived by contemplation of ‘case in language L1’, ‘agreement in L2’, ‘tense in L1 & L3’, ‘aspect in L1 & L4’ etc. The dialogue between the linguists involved in the parametrization of the world’s languages is motivated by the practical tasks they solve, rather than by the choice of any formal framework they may represent.

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Zinken, Jörg (IDS Mannheim):

Impersonal deontic constructions in social interaction

This presentation examines communicative motivations for impersonality by describing some affordances of impersonal (deontic) constructions in social interaction. Two activity contexts in which impersonal deontic constructions are regularly employed will be the focus of this presentations: getting everyday work done (e.g., Polish *trzeba do stolu nakryć*, ‘it is necessary to lay the table’), and enforcing game rules (e.g., German *das darf man erst nächste Runde ausspielen*, ‘one may only play this next round’). A generic affordance of impersonal deontic constructions in these contexts is that they “detach” the stated obligation from the dyadic situation – an affordance that speakers draw on to design their action in particular ways. On a methodological level, the presentation aims to illustrate how natural interaction data can be useful in studying invariants in the form and function of impersonal (deontic) constructions. Data are video recordings of informal interactions in Polish and German.