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## Experimental Approaches to Construction Grammar

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This workshop aims to promote more systematic interactions between usage-based Construction Grammar and experimental approaches to linguistic modelling. Construction Grammar encompasses a range of theoretical models (Hoffmann and Trousdale 2013: 109-252) which share a number of core assumptions, including: constructions (i.e., form-meaning pairs) are the basic building blocks of language and they are organised in a structured network, linguistic knowledge emerges from domain-general processes and is non-modular, so a strict lexicon/syntax dichotomy is rejected, and there are no transformational or derivational rules (Goldberg 2013: 15). Construction Grammarians have been and remain very attentive to the ways in which these claims can be tested and potentially falsified (Cappelle 2024). To do so, corpus-based methods have been widely used and developed, to the point that we are now “drowning in an unmanageable number of interesting and methodologically extremely diverse studies” (Gries 2025: 173). By comparison though, experimental approaches have been drawn upon to a relatively lesser degree. Yet experimental methods offer crucial complementary insights into how constructions are processed, acquired, and represented in the mind, facilitating a more nuanced understanding of language as a cognitive and communicative system. With this workshop, we therefore hope to rekindle Kortmann's (2021: 1220) incentive to “use a dual-approach or multi-method design” when making claims about cognition.

Particular attention is taken not to focus on native speakers of English only. This workshop not only aims at discussing research questions that relate to monolingual cognition, it also expands to issues relevant to Second Language Acquisition (hence, SLA) with the consideration of Applied Cognitive Linguistics (Llopis-García 2024) and Applied/Pedagogical Construction grammar (De Knop & Gilquin 2016, Höder *et al* 2021, Boas 2022) and of what has been referred to as Diasystematic Construction Grammar (DCxG) (Höder 2018, 2019; i.e., the constructionist framework to SLA and multilingual practices). Experimental work on languages other than English will be particularly welcome.

We invite presentations that report on any experimental design aimed at testing and fine-tuning Construction Grammar. This may include, but is not limited to, any of the following research questions:

- (1) Is syntax (independently) imbued with meaning? (e.g. Hare & Goldberg 1999, Bencini & Goldberg 2000, Chang, Bock & Goldberg 2003, Goldberg & Bencini 2005, Boyd, Gottschalk & Goldberg 2009, Johnson & Goldberg 2013, Shin & Kim 2021, Li *et al* 2022).
- (2) Is the meaning of grammatical constructions similar to the meaning of lexical constructions? (e.g. Diessel 2019: 107, Divjak *et al* 2022, Leclercq 2024: 159)
- (3) Is linguistic knowledge non-modular and the result of domain-general processes? (e.g. Hilpert 2008, Pulvermüller, Cappelle & Shtyrov 2013)
- (4) Are constructions best defined as entrenched units of the mind or primarily as social conventions? (e.g. Silvennoinen 2023, Ungerer 2023)
- (5) What experimental evidence is there to support the view of language as a structured network and that constructions are interconnected through a variety of links? (e.g. Diessel 2019, Ungerer 2021, 2022, 2024)

- (6) How do constructions vary across languages, and how can experimental approaches capture these differences? (Hijazo-Gascón *et al* 2016, Shin & Kim 2021)
- (7) What mechanisms underlie the acquisition of constructions in SLA? How are constructions represented and stored in the multilingual mind? And more generally, how can language acquisition and pedagogy benefit from an experiment-based approach to Construction Grammar? (e.g., De Knop & Mollica 2016, Baicchi 2016, Suñer & Roche 2019, Kanli 2024)

Beyond the questions listed above, this workshop aims to encourage discussions on innovative methodologies, challenges, and the implications of experimental findings for CxG theory. This involves a reflection on the experimental designs that can be exploited to test the different hypotheses: priming (Ungerer 2021), sorting tasks (Perek 2012), acceptability judgement tasks and sentence completion task (Gries & Wulff 2009), eye-tracking (Kirsch & Konieczny 2019), ERP/EEG and fMRI (Allen *et al* 2012), and Artificial Language Learning (Casenhiser & Goldberg 2005, Wonnacott *et al* 2012). What novel experimental designs can be leveraged to investigate constructions? How can existing paradigms be adapted to address gaps in current research? What are the epistemological postures associated with those innovative methodologies?

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