

Workshop

From a dictionary to a constructicon—how to represent the syntax-lexicon continuum in a digital resource?



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The workshop is organized by the team of the Estonian Research Council grant PRG 1978 'Expanding the scope of a multi-purpose lexicographic resource to grammar and L2 competence'.

The workshop will take place on April 19, 2024, in Tallinn, Estonia (Institute of the Estonian Language, Roosikrantsi 6) as part of the Estonian Association of Applied Linguistics spring conference, and it will be inaugurated by the invited keynote speaker, **Benjamin Lyngfelt** from the University of Gothenburg.

For almost twenty years now, the idea has circulated that more complex linguistic units with variable components should be described in a resource similar to an electronic dictionary – a constructicon (Fillmore 2006, 2008). Put simply, the reason for this is that not all complex linguistic units are regularly formed or have predictable semantics or pragmatics based on their components. At the same time, the lexicon cannot be described as a separate module: for instance, lexical items may have meanings that they acquire only in specific syntactic contexts. The idea of the constructicon stems from a specific theoretical framework—Construction Grammar—according to which all linguistic knowledge consists of units that have both form and meaning, although they vary in terms of schematicity. Most importantly, a continuum between lexicon and syntax has been postulated, suggesting the impossibility of drawing a boundary between lexicon and grammar (see e.g Goldberg, 2003; Hoffmann & Trousdale 2013).

The aim of the workshop

The aim of the current workshop is practical—to exchange experiences and ideas on how to start a systematic description and representation of constructions from scratch, in an existing lexical database, which has been under development for some time. We hope to learn from one another's experiences, as similar projects have already been initiated worldwide, for languages such as English, Swedish, Russian, Brazilian Portuguese, Japanese, German (see e.g Lyngfelt et al., 2018; Ziem et al., 2019; Boas et al., 2022), and Hungarian (Sass, 2023).



The workshop will be held in English



EKI.ee - PRG1978



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Please follow the instructions of abstract submission on the conference webpage. Notification of acceptance 24.03.2024.

We look forward to presentations and discussions on, but not limited to, the following topics:

- How to define a construction—narrowly or in a broader sense? Should a construction encompass the most general phrase structure constructions or be limited to idiosyncratic constructions?
- Which constructions should be included in the resource, i.e., how to arrive at a nomenclature?
- What should a constructional entry look like in the database?
- How to deal with constructions at different levels of abstraction?
- What are the best practices of identifying the constructions?
- How to describe the variability of constructions?
- How to describe the productivity and frequency of constructions?
- What relationships and how should be shown between constructions, and between constructions and other units (i.e., lexical) in the same database?
- How to fit all constructional information into a data model initially designed for representing lexical units?
- How to ensure that the meta-language of descriptions is user-friendly for learners, native speakers, linguists, and NLP applications simultaneously?
- What should be the relationship between the construction and corpora—how can raw data, entries and examples be automatically extracted from a corpus?
- How can users search for constructions in the dictionary/database? Based on meaning, fixed components, part-of-speech, etc.?
- How to represent constructions by proficiency levels?

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