Towards a dialogic construction grammar: a corpus-based approach to interactional grounding strategies and *ad hoc* routines

The various incarnations of construction grammar (CxG) present themselves broadly as usage-based accounts of grammatical patterns in which all levels of linguistic organization are inextricably bound to form symbolic units. Although from its very onset, CxG stresses the conventional association between grammatical form and pragmatic meaning, in the sense that grammatical constructions evoke or are constrained by particular usage situations (Goldberg 1995), it has only recently started to inquire more systematically into the specific constructional repertoire of spoken language situations (Fried & Östman 2005; Günthner & Imo 2006). In doing so, the model aims to live up to its claim as a grammatical theory that takes into account both the cognitive and interactional basis of language.

The present paper ties in with the burgeoning development of a dialogic construction grammar by introducing a dimension of *online syntax* in multi-agent discourse (Du Bois 2001; Auer 2007). Starting point is the basic principle that speakers in a conversational setting aim at maximally aligning their turns in order to establish common ground (Clark 1996; Pickering & Garrod 2004). In this paper, I argue that in the process of interactional alignment or synchronisation, local constructional routines are established that produce a linear-sequential effect of resonance. These *ad hoc* constructions may serve the process of interactionally grounding the ongoing discourse. At a theoretical level, the present paper develops a cognitive-linguistic model for the analysis of alignment phenomena, which describes the emergence of structural parallelisms between successive turns in terms of an *online* process of grammatical construction building. In order to empirically support the theoretical claim, I present the results of a systematic corpus-based analysis of the phenomena at hand. On the basis of a large-scale comparable corpus of different genres of interactional language use in German and Dutch (both institutionalized discourse such as journalistic/political debates and spontaneous conversations), I present a quantitative and qualitative analysis of (i) the *spectrum* of ad hoc constructional routines at different levels of linguistic organization, (ii) the *cognitive processes* involved in establishing cross-turn mapping relations (such as schematization and extension), (iii) the *interpersonal* aims and *pragmatic* effects of interactional grounding strategies in multi-agent discourse, and (iv) *genre differences* in the complexity and scope of local constructional routines. What thus emerges is an account of the dialogic shaping of grammatical constructions at the interface between usage-based cognitive linguistics and usage-oriented interactional linguistics.

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