

Workshop (Language Change in IE)

Naxos 2019

List of Participants-Titles

+ Abstracts

Why do words change? The case of the terms for the upper limbs in Greek and other Indo-European languages.

Iván Andrés-Alba

Universidad Autónoma de Madrid

Old English Verbs of Motion. Meaning Components and Argument Realization

Sara Domínguez Barragán

University of La Rioja

Old English Adverbs: Extraction and Lemmatization with YCOE

Yosra Hamdoun Bghiyel

Universidad de La Rioja

The diachrony of psychological predicates in Portuguese: from zero to dative back to zero

Ana Regina Vaz Calindro

UFRJ, Rio de Janeiro

Aspectual projections in temporal and spatial PPs and inherent Case in Greek

Manuel Español-Echevarría

Université Laval

Reconstructing the syntax of PIE participles: Evidence from the periphrastic construction

Thanasis Giannaris & Nikolaos Pantelidis

National & Kapodistrian University of Athens

On VS in Hittite and beyond: methodological challenges

Eugenio Gorla

Università di Torino

How constructions in the passive voice contribute instrumentally to controversy

Eugene Green

Boston University

Syntactic constraints on negative contracted verbs in early English and early High German

Isabella Greisinger

Universität Düsseldorf

The RUKI-rule and the early Indo-Iranian-Uralic contacts

Sampsa Holopainen

University of Helsinki

The (pre-)history of the Old Norse adjectival article

Alexander Pfaff

University of Oslo

Morphological simplification in the late Northumbrian dialect: the case of weak verbs class II

Elisa Ramírez Pérez

Cardiff University

Absolute constructions in Greek

Vassilios Spyropoulos

National and Kapodistrian University of Athens

Gender-assignment as a marker of Different Object Marking

Letizia Vezzosi

University of Florence

Why we should not expect too much from computational-phylogenetic dates

Igor Yanovich

Universität Tübingen

Why do words change? The case of the terms for the upper limbs in Greek and other Indo-European languages

Iván Andrés-Alba

Universidad Autónoma de Madrid

ivan.andres@uam.es

Words designating parts of the body represent an important part of the core lexicon of every language. They are generally quite conservative terms, often inherited from older stages of the language, which in many cases can be dated back to Indo-European times. Nonetheless, not every term has the same degree of stability, since this varies not only depending on the part of the body itself, but also on the language and linguistic family. Some of these concepts have a greater trend towards lexical or semantic change, that is, they tend to modify their signifier either by an external loanword or by an inner change of meaning, according to various internal (physical) and external (sociocultural) factors (WILKINS, 1996).

The terms for the upper limbs of the human body are a good sample of this phenomenon, since they build a so called “synecdochic chain”, that is, a series of linked elements whose physical order cannot be alternated. On the linguistic level, however, the designation of the segments of these chains can vary throughout the history of a language, for not every segment has the same function and shape and, thus, the same semantic relevance.

As an example of this I propose a study of the Greek words for the upper limbs (mainly χείρ ‘hand’, πῆχυς ‘forearm’, βραχίον ‘upper arm’, ὤμος ‘shoulder’), paying special attention to the analysis of the semantic functions (s. CRESPO, 2003) that every part can execute in any action. This shall be presented here shortly and together with examples of other Indo-European languages in order to achieve a clear vision of the structure and development of the upper limbs’ synecdochic system and, thus, a better understanding of the semantic and lexical change affecting the parts of the body, since the same principle can be applied to other synecdochic chains (like the lower limbs or the head).

Selected references

- BEEKES, R. S. P.; BEEK, L. (2010). *Etymological dictionary of Greek*. Leiden: Brill.
- BUCK, C. D. (1949). *A dictionary of selected synonyms in the principal Indo-European languages: a contribution to the history of ideas*. Chicago: The University of Chicago Press.
- CRESPO, E.; CONTI, L.; MAQUIEIRA, H. (2003). *Sintaxis del griego clásico*. Madrid: Gredos.
- LEHMANN, C. (2016). *Foundations of body part grammar*. University of Erfurt.

- LIST, J. M.; MAYER, T.; TERHALLE, A.; URBAN, M. (2014). *CLICS: Database of Cross-Linguistic Colexifications*. Marburg: Forschungszentrum Deutscher Sprachatlas.
- WILKINS, D. P. (1996). “Natural tendencies of semantic change and the search for cognates”, in DURIE, M.; ROSS, M. (eds.), *The Comparative Method reviewed: Regularity and irregularity in language change*. New York: Oxford University Press. 264–304.

Old English Verbs of Motion. Meaning Components and Argument Realization

Sara Domínguez Barragán

University of La Rioja

saradmz@hotmail.com

This paper seeks to study the relationship between syntax and semantics as reflected in Old English verbal classes. It focuses on the verbs found in intransitive motion constructions that convey a meaning of change of location, including verbs of neutral motion like *to go*, verbs of manner of motion, such as *to run*, and verbs of path of motion, such as *to enter*. The aim of the analysis is to determine to what extent these groups of verbs are consistent as to their grammatical behaviour.

The theoretical foundation of this work draws on Goddard (1997) and, above all, on Talmy (1985), who puts forward a cross-linguistic typology of lexicalization patterns that distinguishes between satellite-framed languages and verb-framed languages; and Levin (1993), who defines verbal classes with respect to their shared meaning and their different argument realizations. The descriptive part of this work applies the theoretical basis to Old English in order to describe the linguistic expression of motion in this language and the scope of the analysis of the study.

In Levin’s (1993) model of verb classes and alternations, a shared meaning is not enough to justify verbal class membership; it is necessary for the verbs in the class to share their grammatical behaviour too. In order to come to a conclusion in this respect, it will be necessary to find the verbs in each class, examine their meaning components, check their grammatical behaviour with dictionaries, describe such grammatical behaviour in a way that allows comparison and define the alternations that characterise each class, if there are any. As far as meaning components are concerned, this work concentrates on the study of polysemy. The parameters of morphosyntactic analysis include transitivity, case, prepositional government and reflexivity –a feature of most verbs of neutral motion that might also be shared by manner of motion and path of motion verbs– as described in *The Dictionary of Old English* (2016).

The conclusions of this work make reference to the verb classes and alternations found in the analysis.

References

- Goddard, C. 1997. "The semantics of coming and going". *Pragmatics* 7 (2): 147- 162.
- Healey, A. diPaolo, ed. 2016. *The Dictionary of Old English in Electronic Form A-H*. Toronto: Dictionary of Old English Project, Centre for Medieval Studies, University of Toronto.
- Levin, B. 1993. *English Verb Classes and Alternations*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.
- Talmy, L. 1985. Lexicalization patterns: Semantic structure in lexical forms. In T. Shopen (ed.), *Language typology and syntactic description*. Volume III: Syntactic categories and the lexicon. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press. 57-149.

Old English Adverbs: Extraction and Lemmatization with YCOE

Yosra Hamdoun Bghiyel
Universidad de La Rioja
yosra.hamdoun@alum.unirioja.es

The main object of this paper is to describe and present the results of the lemmatisation process of the Old English superlative adverbs through a semi-automatic procedure. Lemmatisation refers to the process by which the attestations of inflectional forms, the superlative adverbs in this case, are assigned a dictionary word or lemma. Old English corpora and dictionaries, although being valuable sources of philological data, present certain limitations in this regard: none of the existing Old English corpora is still lemmatised, whereas the main dictionaries of reference do not list all the attested inflections of headword entries, except for the *Dictionary of Old English* (DOE), which is only lemmatised for the letters A-I. To that aim, *The York-Toronto-Helsinki Parsed Corpus of Old English Prose* and *The York-Helsinki Parsed Corpus of Old English Poetry* annotated corpora, including 1.5 million words and 15,000 words respectively, have been used, which present part of speech tagging (POS) and syntactic parsing (PSD). The methodology for the extraction of the inflectional forms consists of an automatic search of the morphological tag ADVS in the POS files in the aforementioned corpora. In a second step, the resulting forms have been preliminary assigned a lemma manually. On the lemmatiser *Norna*, the resulting inflectional forms are filed and assigned to a lemma based on the reference list of headwords provided by the lexical database of Old English *Nerthus*. The standard dictionaries of Old English, including Sweet, Bosworth-Toller and Clark-Hall, have guided lemmatisation choices, the latter being especially reliable due to its consistent spelling and balance between early and late variants (Ellis 1993). The forms obtained after lemmatisation have been compared with those attested by Seelig (1930). The discussion of the results focuses on the forms that are not attested by this author. The conclusions delve into how the results validate the compatibility of corpus linguistics and lexicography, while evince that extensive

collections of linguistic data annotated for lemma and inflection are needed for the sake of greater accuracy when analysing the historical evolution of non-grammatical words.

The diachrony of psychological predicates in Portuguese: from zero to dative back to zero

Ana Regina Vaz Calindro

Departamento de Linguística e Filologia
Faculdade de Letras – UFRJ, Rio de Janeiro
arcalindro@gmail.com

The main goal of this paper is to investigate the variation and change in the expression of indirect arguments (IAs) that accompany psychological predicates in historical Portuguese: example (1) for modern European Portuguese (EP) and (2) for modern Brazilian Portuguese (BP):

- (1) O vinho agradou **aos convidados** / agradou-**lhes**.
The wine pleased P_{a(to)} the guests.DAT/ pleased-**3SG.DAT**
- (2) O vinho agradou **Ø os convidados** / **os** agradou/ agradou **eles**.
The wine pleased the guests.ACC / **3SG.ACC** please/ pleased **3SG.NOM**

In EP, the IA is introduced by the preposition *a* and always alternates with dative clitics. Hence, the preposition assigns Dative Case to the object. In BP, there is *no marking* (cf. 2), and the argument of the verb alternates with accusative clitics in the formal register and with nominative in the spoken variety.

Data extracted from a diachronic corpus of Portuguese (*Tycho Brahe Corpus* (Galves, Andrade & Faria, 2017) has shown that Case assignment has undergone a unique process in the context of psychological verbs: from unmarked value (cf. 3 from the 16th century), to marked accusative (cf. 4 from the 17th century), to dative in EP (cf. 1) and unmarked accusative in BP (cf. 2).

- (3) A dos Fonccenxum: êstes adoram **o Sol**.
The of.the Focccenxum these adore **the Sun.NP-ACC**
- (4) Ha subgeytos que logo em pizando a terra enamoraõ **ao Ceo**.
Exist men that soon in stepping the land will.love P_{a(to)}.**PP-ACC** the sky

Our first assumption was that this marking was related to the object, not to the event structure itself, as is the case of DOM (Differential Object Marking). In modern BP,

however, this marking was completely lost (cf. 2), what is in accordance with other losses in BP: third-person accusative clitics, third-person dative clitics; and the multifunctional clitic *se* (cf. Galves, 2001). Hence, case marking has undergone several changes in Portuguese (cf. Carvalho & Calindro, 2018). The psychological predicates analyzed here show that this context was one of the first steps from the many changes Portuguese has gone through regarding case assignment.

References

- CARVALHO, J. & CALINDRO, A. “A unified account for the loss of third person clitics in Brazilian Portuguese”. In: *Pronomes, Morfossintaxe, Semântica e Processamento*. Ed. UFBA. 2018
- GALVES, Charlotte. *Ensaio sobre as gramáticas do português*. Editora da Unicamp, 2001
- GALVES, C.; ANDRADE, A. & FARIA, P.. *Tycho Brahe Parsed Corpus of Historical Portuguese*. URL: <http://www.tycho.iel.unicamp.br/~tycho/corpus/texts/psd.zip>, 2017.

Aspectual projections in temporal and spatial PPs and inherent Case in Greek

Manuel Español-Echevarría

Université Laval

Manuel.Espanol-Echevarria@lli.ulaval.ca

The talk focuses on the evolution of temporal prepositions in the history of Greek. I identify some properties distinguishing temporal PPs from locative ones, cf. [1], [2], [4]. For instance, temporal prepositions in Medieval and Modern Greek do not evolve from adverbs or nouns reanalyzed as prepositions, as it is the case since Hellenistic Greek with many spatial prepositions, such as (*ὑπο*)κάτω, (*hypo*)kátō, “under” in (1):

(1)	Homeric	ὑπὸ ποσσὶ (Il. 2.784)	“under the feet[DAT]”
		hypò possí	
	Classical	ὑπὸ τοὺς πόδας (Xen. Oec. 18.5)	“under the feet[ACC]”
		hypò toùs pódas	
	Koine	ὑποκάτω τῶν ποδῶν (Mark 6:11)	“under the feet[GEN]”
		hypokátō tōn podōn	
	Modern	κάτω ἀπὸ τα πόδια	“under the feet[ACC]”
		káto apó ta pódja	

from Bortone (2010: 189)

In addition, in Modern Greek spatial prepositions, as opposed to temporal ones, require a second preposition, *από*, *apó*, “from” or *σε*, *se*, “to” to introduce the locative DP and a different meaning, as shown in (2), cf. [6]:

- (2) a. μπροστά *(σε/απο) το σπίτι
 brostá *(se/apó) to spíti
 in-front to/from the house.ACC
- b. μετά (από) το Πάσχα
 metá (apó) to Pásha
 after from the Easter
 “after Easter”

I adopt van Gelderen’s (2011) proposal, see also [5], to the derivation of semantic/inherent Case, as in (3):

- (3) [PP *after* [KP [DP Easter]]]
 [u-phi] [3S]
 [i-time]/ACC [u-time]/[u-Case]

The preposition *after* in (3) contains unvalued phi-features, [u-phi], to be valued by the DP phi-features. In addition, the interpretable time feature on the preposition, [i-time], values the unvalued time feature, [u-time], in the DP, yielding accusative inherent Case. The same idea can be easily transferred to spatial contexts, with an [i-loc] feature on P. Elaborating on this, I propose an additional projection, which I label LocAsp (Locative Aspect), mediating the assignment of semantic/inherent locative Case in Greek, as in (4):

- (4) [PP μπροστά [LOCASP σε/από [KP [DP το σπίτι]]]]
 brostá se/apó to spíti
 [u-phi] [u-D] [3S]
 [i-loc] [i-locasp]/ACC [u-loc]
 [u-Case]

Crucially, Case in (4) is valued by the innermost LocAsp head. I show that an overt or covert LocAspect head has been active throughout the history of Greek in spatial contexts, whereas its temporal counterpart TempAspectP (Temporal Aspect) has been active only up to Medieval Greek.

References

- Bortone, Pietro (2010) *Greek Prepositions: From Antiquity to the Present*. Oxford/New York: Oxford University Press.
- Coulter, George, H. (2014) *Expressions of Time in Ancient Greek*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- van Gelderen, Elly (2011) *The Linguistic Cycle: Language Change and the Language Faculty*. Oxford/New York: Oxford University Press.
- Luraghi, Silvia (2003) *On the Meaning of Prepositions and Cases: The expression of semantic roles in Ancient Greek*. Amsterdam/Philadelphia: John Benjamins.

Pesetsky, David and Esther Torrego (2007) “The Syntax of Valuation and the Interpretability of Features”. In S. Karimi, V. Samiian, and W. K. Wilkins (eds.) *Phrasal and Clausal Architecture* (pp. 262-294). Amsterdam/Philadelphia: John Benjamins.

Terzi, Arhonto (2010) “Locative Prepositions and Place”. In Guglielmo Cinque Cinque and Luigi Rizzi (eds.) *Mapping spatial PPs. The cartography of syntactic structures*, vol. 6. 3-15. Oxford/New York: Oxford University Press.

Reconstructing the syntax of PIE participles: Evidence from the periphrastic construction

Thanasis Giannaris & Nikolaos Pantelidis

National & Kapodistrian University of Athens

agiannar@phil.uoa.gr; npantel@phil.uoa.gr

A well-known feature of many IE languages is the periphrastic use of the various participial forms, alongside the attributive, predicative and adverbial use. Typically, these periphrastic constructions consist of the copula verb (BE) plus the participle (see Meiser 2004, Drinka 2009). In this paper we investigate this syntactic feature from a twofold perspective: 1) syntactic reconstruction of this use for PIE 2) processes and mechanisms of syntactic change involved in the development of this use in the various IE languages.

The participles of PIE have been a much discussed issue of PIE morphology (e.g. Szemerényi 1996, Meier-Brügger 2003, Petit & Pinault 2017). Three sets of forms are usually reconstructed for the verb system of PIE, the present/aorist (*-nt-), the perfect (-*wos-), and the mediopassive (*-meno-/-mno-) participles. Further, an arguably more adjectival form, namely the *-to-/-no- form, is also accepted. However, their specific semantic and syntactic properties are a matter of debate (e.g. Meillet 1929, Drinka 2009, Melchert 2017). Drawing on data from several IE languages (Ancient Greek, Latin, Sanskrit, Hittite, Old English, Old High German), we investigate the periphrastic use of the participles with a view to answering three main questions: 1) Does the acceptance of the participle as a category for PIE necessarily imply the acceptance of a periphrastic use? 2) Is the periphrastic use a property that concerns all the morphologically reconstructed forms? 3) Can the verbal reading of the construction BE (auxiliary) + participle, be clearly distinguished from the syntactic predication consisting of a copula BE + participle and be posited as a feature for the proto-language?

In our discussion it will be argued that the constructions in question reflect the gradient (in the sense of Aarts 2007) nature (i.e. verbal and nominal) of the participle as a category. In that respect, their syntactic status can be seen as being diachronically unstable and very amenable to gradual shifts towards verbal or adjectival status. Thus,

it seems plausible to reconstruct for PIE, not a distinct periphrastic use of the participles, but, rather, the first step in what will evolve into a gradient (adjectival to verbal) predication.

References

- Aarts, B. (2007). *Syntactic Gradience. The Nature of Grammatical Indeterminacy*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Drinka, B. (2009). The *-to-/-no- construction of Indo-European. In V. Bubenik, J. Hewson, S. Rose (eds.), *Grammatical Change in Indo-European languages*. Amsterdam/Philadelphia: John Benjamins Publishing Company, 141-158.
- Le Feuvre, C. D. Petit & G. J. Pinault (eds.), *Verbal Adjectives and Participles in Indo-European Languages. Proceedings of the Conference of the Society for Indo-European Studies (Indogermanische Gesellschaft), Paris 24th to 26th September 2014*. Bremen: Hempen Verlag.
- Meillet, A. (1929). Les adjectives grecs en -tos. *Donum Natalicium Schrijnen: Versameling van Opstellen*. Nijmegen/Utrecht: N.V. Dekker & van de Vegt, 635-639.
- Meier-Brügger, M. (2003). *Indo-European Linguistics*. Berlin: De Gruyter.
- Meiser, G. (2004). Die Periphrase im Urindogermanischen. In A. Hyllested, A. R. Jørgensen, J.H. Larsson & Th. Olander (eds.), *Per Aspera ad Asteriscos. Studia Indogermanica in honorem E.J. Rasmussen*. Innsbruck: Institut für Sprachen und Literaturen der Universität Innsbruck, 343-353.
- Melchert, H. C. (2017). The source(s) of Indo-European participles in *-e/ont-. In C. Le Feuvre, D. Petit & G. J. Pinault (eds.), *Verbal Adjectives and Participles in Indo-European Languages. Proceedings of the Conference of the Society for Indo-European Studies (Indogermanische Gesellschaft), Paris 24th to 26th September 2014*. Bremen: Hempen Verlag, 217-220.

On VS in Hittite and beyond: methodological challenges

Eugenio Gorla

Università di Torino

eugenio.gorla@unito.it

In spite of its rather rigid SOV sentence structure, Hittite admits under certain pragmatic conditions also a less frequent clause-initial VS pattern (Luraghi 1990, 1995, Hoffner & Melchert 2008, Sideltsev 2014, 2015); see example:

(1) MH/MS (CTH 200) ABoT 1.60 obv. 5`-8` (Sideltsev 2015: 95; my gloss and translation)

(As soon as I dispatched those tablets to Your Majesty, my lord,)

šalik-aš=ma=mu	karuwariwar	^m Niriqqaili-š	LÚ	URUTabḥa[llu]
approach-3SG.PST=but=me.DAT	following.morning	Nerikkaili-NOM.SG.C	man	Taphallu

“early the following morning Nerikkaili, the man from Taphallu, approached me (and brought me the message)”.

In this paper, I will tackle two major issues. The first one deals with the pragmatic functions of clause-initial VS in Hittite. The second deals with the comparability of the Hittite data with similar structures occurring in other ancient IE languages, such as Latin and Ancient Greek (see Luraghi 1995, Bauer 2009 among others).

The analysis will be limited to main clauses with a verb in the indicative mood and I will consider only cases of full-fledged initial verbs like (1), that is when the verb occurs as the first stressed word in the clause and hosts clitics in Wackernagel's position (Luraghi 1990). Such cases are to be regarded as dependent from the information structure of the clause in which they occur (Sideltsev 2014, 2015); therefore, building on previous works on information structure (see Lambrecht 1994, Dik 1997 and especially Goedegebuure 2009 for an analysis of Hittite), I will analyse a selection of texts from Old Hittite to New Hittite, following Goedegebuure (2014), and classify all the occurrences of clause-initial VS according to: (i) the degree of activation of the subject (new, accessible, active); (ii) the type of focus-structure of the clause (sentence-focus, predicate-focus or argument-focus); (iii) the presence of pragmatic presupposition. Text type and chronological stage will also represent a major parameter in the analysis, as we know that the left periphery of the clause undergoes a process of grammaticalisation from Old Hittite to New Hittite (Inglese 2016).

The second stage of the work will consist in the application of the same categories of analysis to a selection of Ancient Greek and Latin texts. Clause-initial VS is in fact attested in both languages (see Luraghi 1995), but the functions are hardly comparable to the ones attested in Hittite. The results are expected to increase our knowledge of the relationship between verb fronting and information structure in Indo-European and of the further language-specific developments of this structure.

References

- Bauer, Brigitte. 2009. "Word Order." In *New Perspectives on Historical Latin Syntax. Volume 1: Syntax of the Sentence.*, 1:241–316. Trends in Linguistics. Studies and Monographs. Berlin: De Gruyter.
- Dik, Simon C. 1997. *The Theory of Functional Grammar*. 2nd, rev. ed ed. Functional Grammar Series 20–21. Berlin ; New York: Mouton de Gruyter.
- Goedegebuure, Petra. 2009. "Focus in Hittite and the Stressed Pronoun Apa-: In Search of a Method." In *Pragmatische Kategorien. Form, Funktion Und Diachronie. Akten Der Arbeitstagung Der Indogermanischen Gesellschaft 24.–26.*, by Elizabeth Rieken and Paul Widmer, 93–112. Wiesbaden: Reichert.
- . 2014. *The Hittite Demonstratives. Studies in Deixis, Topic and Focus*. Studien zu den Boğazköy-Texten 55. Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz Verlag.
- Hoffner, Harry A., and Craig Melchert. 2008. *A Grammar of the Hittite Language. Pt. 1: Reference Grammar*. Languages of the Ancient Near East 1. Winona Lake, Ind: Eisenbrauns.
- Inglese, Guglielmo. 2016. *Subordination and Sentence Connectives in Old Hittite. A Corpus-Based Study of Clause-Linkage Strategies in Old Hittite*. München: Lincom.

- Lambrecht, Knud. 1994. *Information Structure. Topic, Focus, and the Mental Representations of Discourse Referents*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Luraghi, Silvia. 1990. *Old Hittite Sentence Structure*. London: Routledge.
- . 1995. “The Pragmatics of Verb Initial Sentences in Some Ancient Indo-European Languages.” In *Word Order in Discourse*, by Pamela Downing and Michael Noonan, 355–86. *Typological Studies in Language* 30. Amsterdam: John Benjamins.
- Sideltsev, Andrej V. 2014. “Clause Internal and Clause Leftmost Verbs in Hittite.” *Altorientalische Forschungen* 41 (1). <https://doi.org/10.1515/aof-2014-0007>.
- . 2015. “Hittite Clause Architecture.” *Revue d’assyriologie et d’archéologie Orientale* 109 (1): 79. <https://doi.org/10.3917/assy.109.0079>.

How constructions in the passive voice contribute instrumentally to controversy

Eugene Green

Boston University

eugreen@bu.edu

Passive voice utterances in context encourage responses, ranging from concurrence to dismissal, from late Middle English readers onwards. Often enough, Middle English uses the passive voice to invite ready concurrence, as in Trevisa’s comment on atmospheric conditions, translated from *De Proprietatibus Rerum*: “The lightenyng is sonner y-seye þan þe þundre is y-herde,” 333b/b. Yet lines in the passive voice found in the *Canterbury Tales*, *Sir Gawain and The Green Knight*, *Piers Plowman*, *Wynnere and Wastoure* evince a pragmatic awareness of controversy in public discourse. Since these constructions are instruments harnessed to help engage audiences, a study of their occurrences requires also an analysis of pragmatic give and take. In *The Shipman’s Tale*, say, the narrator’s comment on the expense of a wife’s wardrobe opens itself to a swath of contemporary responses:

And if that he moght may, par aventure,
 Or ellis list no swich dispence endure,
 But thynketh it is wasted and ylost,
 Thanne moot another payen for oure cost,
 Or lene us gold, and that is perilous.

The *if ... then* structure that embeds the passive construction induces readers to weigh assent against other possibilities; pragmatically Chaucer weighs what is said openly against what is not. The verb *thynketh* departs from the middle voice to posit in the following passive clause an assumed attitude that pragmatically drives controversy. Whereas Trevisa’s statement counts on his audience’s immediate, sensory concurrence,

Chaucer lets the unsaid drive attitudes that help generate curiosity in his unfolding tale. This form of challenging inducement finds comparable late Middle English patterns in need of identification and analysis, directed at arousing readers' judgments.

Utterances framed in the passive voice but unexpressed assume a contemporary Middle English awareness of a multi-dimensional pragmatics. Speakers differently disposed range from those convinced, to those skeptical, or uncertain, inasmuch, too, as they possibly have access to contradictory texts (say, on sumptuary regulations). The critical literature is now beginning to address the issue of pragmatic controversy, but the use of passive constructions, is a strategy still unexplored. The talk proposed is necessarily introductory, aimed primarily at identifying practices in Middle English that link passive constructions to controversy, rhetorically shaped for readers whose commitments, largely assumed, may differ.

References

- Fritz, Gloning, Glüer *Historical Pragmatics of Controversies*. Amsterdam: John Benjamins. 2018.
- Stede, Manfred and Jodi Schneider. *Argumentation Mining*. Morgan & Claypool Publishers.

Syntactic constraints on negative contracted verbs in early English and early High German

Isabella Greisinger

Universität Düsseldorf

isabella.greisinger@gmail.com

In early West Germanic, the clitic negative particle *ne* or a variant thereof could either be fused with the verb (e.g. OE *næbbe* 'not has', MHG *enkunnen* 'not can') or be placed adjacent to the verb (e.g. ME *ne wille* 'not can' or OHG *ni waniu* 'not believe'). As for OE and ME, negative contraction of the verb and *ne* is blocked by topicalization (Blockley 1988), the clause-final position, the clause-initial position, and imperatives (Iyeiri 2001). A syntactic condition for the occurrence of negative contracted verbs is that the subject and (all) the object(s) have to be expressed overtly in the respective clause or sentence (Blockley 1988, 1990, 2001). The syntactic contexts which favour or avoid negative contracted verbs in OHG and MHG as well as contrastive syntactic studies of negative contraction in early English and early High German have gained hardly any attention in the literature. This paper investigates the syntactic environment of negative contracted verbs in OE and ME and OHG and MHG as well as the loss of negative contracted verbs in ME and MHG from a contrastive viewpoint.

Based on an analysis of a number of standard corpora of OHG and MHG and of new data from hitherto unanalyzed corpora of OE and ME I will demonstrate that there are cross-linguistic syntactic constraints on negative contracted verbs with *ne*. Some of the syntactic environments which block negative contraction in early English avoid negative contraction in early High German too, for example the left sentence periphery. Regarding the syntactic contexts which allow for negative contraction, just like early English, OHG and MHG require that there is no covert verbal argument in the clause or sentence for negative contracted verbs to occur. The study of cross-linguistic syntactic constraints and the loss of negative contracted verbs with *ne* in early West Germanic is motivated not only by the interest in historical syntax and language change, but also by the aim to search for language universals which account for the syntactic restrictions in question and to find out if and how universals of language change contribute to the loss of negative contracted verbs in ME and MHG.

References

- Blockley, Mary. 1988. Constraints on Negative Contraction with the Finite Verb and the Syntax of Old English Poetry. *Studies in Philology*, 85 (4), p. 428-450.
- Blockley, Mary. 1990. Uncontracted Negation as a Cue to Sentence structure in Old English Verse. *The Journal of English and Germanic Philology*, 89 (4), p. 475-490.
- Blockley, Mary. 2001. *Aspects of Old English poetic syntax: Where clauses begin*. Urbana and Chicago: University of Illinois Press [Illinois Medieval Studies].
- Iyeiri, Yoko. 2001. *Negative constructions in Middle English*. Fukuoka: Kyushu University Press.

The *RUKI*-rule and the early Indo-Iranian-Uralic contacts

Sampsa Holopainen

University of Helsinki

sampsa.holopainen@helsinki.fi

It is often stated that in the *RUKI*-rule operated regularly in Proto-Indo-Iranian, while in Balto-Slavic the rule shows incomplete results (Hock 2016: 11–15), pointing to a late diffusion of this change from Indo-Iranian to Balto-Slavic. However, possible exceptions to the *RUKI*-rule in the Nuristani branch of Indo-Iranian have been seen as evidence pointing to a late development of the rule within Indo-Iranian itself, after the split-off of Nuristani (Hegedüs 2012: 164).

The early Indo-Iranian loanwords in the Uralic languages can offer valuable evidence for this problem. Proto-Uralic had a system of three sibilants (**s*, **ś* and **š*), and in loanwords the reflexes Proto-Indo-Iranian **s*, **ć* (< PIE **k*) and **š* are usually distinguished, PIIr. **š* being reflected by Uralic **š* in most cases (for example, Uralic **wiša* 'venom' ← PIIr **wiša-*). This occurs also in very early „Pre-Indo-Iranian”

loanwords which derive from a stage before the merger of non-high vowels in Indo-Iranian (Koivulehto 2001: 248–252); for example *mekši 'bee' ← Pre-IIr *mekš- (> Avestan maxšī- 'fly'). This points to a very early operation of the rule in Indo-Iranian.

However, there are also possible counter-examples to the *š substitution in Uralic, where *s appears instead of *š. Some of these cases have been explained in various ways, either as borrowed before the operation of the RUKI-rule (Rédei 1986: 62), or as later borrowings from an Iranian language that shows Ossetic-type development of *rš > rs, or alternatively due to different sound-substitutions in consonant clusters (Parpola 2005: 43–44), but no systematic study of all these etymologies exists.

In this presentation all the relevant etymologies will be critically commented, and it is shown that the Uralic evidence points to the regular and early occurrence of the rule in Indo-Iranian. This fits well with the evidence from Baltic loans into Finnic, which also show the RUKI-sibilant reflected as *š, even in some cases where Lithuanian shows s (Junttila 2016: 218–219; Kallio 2008: 267), pointing to the conclusion that the exceptions to the RUKI-rule are secondary developments in both Indo-Iranian and Balto-Slavic.

References

- Hegedűs, Irén 2012: The RUKI rule in Nuristani. – Benedict Nielsen Whitehead et al. (eds.). *The Sound of Indo-European*. Copenhagen: Museum Tusulanum Press.
- Hock, Hans Henrich 2016: The languages, their histories and genetic classification. – Hans Henrich Hock & Elena Bashir (eds.) *Languages and linguistics of South Asia*. Berlin: De Gruyter Mouton. 9–240.
- Junttila, Santeri 2016: Die baltisch-slawische Frage im Lichte der alten Baltischen Lehnwörter des ostseefinnischen. *Baltistica* LI (2): 217–238.
- Kallio, Petri 2008: On the "Early Baltic" Loanwords in Common Finnic. – Alexander Lubotsky et al. (eds.): *Evidence and counter-evidence: Essays in honour of Frederik Kortlandt*. Vol. 1. Amsterdam – New York: Brill. 265–277.
- Koivulehto, Jorma 2001: The earliest contacts between Indo-European and Uralic speakers in the light of lexical loans. – Christian Carpelan, Asko Parpola & Petteri Koskikallio (eds.) *Early Contacts between Uralic and Indo-European: linguistic and archaeological considerations*. Helsinki: Société Finno-Ougrienne. 235–264.
- Parpola, Asko 2005: The Nāsatyas, the Chariot and Proto-Aryan Religion. – *Journal of Indological Studies*, 16 & 17: 1–63.
- Rédei, Károly 1986: *Zu den indogermanisch-uralischen Sprachkontakten*. Wien: Verlag der Österreichischen Akademie der Wissenschaften.

The (pre-) history of the Old Norse adjectival article

Alexander Pfaff

University of Oslo

a.p.pfaff@ilos.uio.no

The overarching goal of this talk is to sketch the development from (a certain type of) nominal phrase in PIE towards (a certain type of) adjectival phrase in Old Norse with a particular emphasis on the so-called adjectival article.

Old Norse has two article elements, a freestanding pre-adjectival one (ART) and one that occurs cliticized to the noun (DEF), see (1). They are etymologically related in that both developed from a Proto-Norse¹ demonstrative *hinn* during the Viking period.² It can be shown that there is a categorial distinction between an adjectival article,³ which forms a narrow constituent with a weakly inflected adjective (A.WK), and a nominal article, which forms a constituent only with the noun – rather than a mere morpho-phonological distinction between free and clitic form.⁴ Having established this, I will examine the relationship between adjectival article and adjective more closely. From Viking period runic material, it emerges that the oldest attestations involve an appositive use of the sequence ART + A.WK occurring with proper names, cf. (2).

- | | | | | |
|-----|----|---|----|---|
| (1) | a. | maðr -inn
<i>man</i> -DEF | c. | maðr (h)inn gamli
<i>man</i> ART <i>old.WK</i> |
| | b. | maðr -inn gamli
<i>man</i> -DEF <i>old.WK</i> | d. | (h)inn gamli maðr
ART <i>old.WK</i> <i>man</i> |
| (2) | a. | kuna harats hins kuþa
<i>wife</i> [<i>Haraldr</i> ART <i>good.WK</i>]-GEN
= ‘(the) wife of <u>Haraldr the Good</u> ’ | | (DR 55) |
| | b. | abtir kara faþur sin in malsbaka
<i>after Kári father</i> POSS ART <i>eloquent.WK</i>
= ‘in memory of <u>Kári the Eloquent</u> , their father’ | | (U 1146) |

I will adopt a view according to which PIE did not have a separate morpho-syntactic class “adjective”, but only one category “nominal” comprising both adjectives and nouns.⁵ On this view, PIE employed close apposition instead of attribution as the mode of modification. A distinct category “adjective” emerges as a result of the diachronic

¹ Prior to ca. 725.

² Ca. 725-1100.

³ The assumption of an adjectival article, especially for Old Norse, is not new, and I will draw on previous work by Nygaard (1906); Heinrichs (1954); Lundebj (1965); Perridon (1996); Himmelmann (1997); Skrzypek (2009, 2010); Perridon and Sleeman (2011); Stroh-Wollin (2009, 2015); Rießler (2016); Börjars and Payne (2016); Börjars et al. (2016).

⁴ This latter view has been proposed e.g. by Roehrs and Sapp (2004); Faarlund (2004, 2007, 2009); Lohndal (2007); Laake (2007); I will briefly point out some of their shortcomings.

⁵ E.g. Osthoff (1876); Törnqvist (1974); see Rehn (2018) for discussion and further references.

development from IE towards her daughter languages. I will propose a refined version of that idea that can schematically be summarized as follows:⁶

Indoeuropean	Germanic	Proto Norse	Viking Period
[<u>xNP</u> A]	[<u>xNP</u> A.WK]	[<u>xNP</u> (DEM) A.WK]	[<u>xNP</u> ART A.WK]
	[<u>AP</u> A.STR]	[<u>AP</u> A.STR]	[<u>AP</u> ART A.WK]
			[<u>AP</u> A.STR]

The relevant step here is re-analysis at the phrasal level, from xNP to AP during the Viking period. This scheme can shed some light on (i) how an element of the noun phrase (demonstrative) can end up as a component of an adjectival phrase, (ii) the nominal character of the oldest attestations, (iii) the interplay between adjectival article and weak inflection.⁷

References

- Börjars, Kersti, and John Payne. 2016. *Adjectival definiteness marking and nounphrase internal functions*. University of Manchester, HEADLEX, 25 July 2016.
- Börjars, Kersti, Pauline Harries, and Nigel Vincent. 2016. Growing syntax: The development of a DP in North Germanic. *Language* 92 (1): 1–37.
- Curme, George O. 1910. The origin and growth of the adjective declension in Germanic. *The Journal of English and Germanic Philology* 9 (4): 439–482.
- Faarlund, Jan Terje. 2004. *The Syntax of Old Norse*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Faarlund, Jan Terje. 2007. From clitic to affix: The Norwegian definite article. *Working Papers in Scandinavian Syntax* 79: 21–46.
- Faarlund, Jan Terje. 2009. On the history of definiteness marking in Scandinavian. *Journal of Linguistics* 45 (3): 617–639.
- Heinrichs, Heinrich Matthias. 1954. *Studien zum bestimmten artikel in den germanischen Sprachen*. Giessen: W. Schmitz.
- Himmelman, Nikolaus P. 1997. *Deiktikon, Artikel, Nominalphrase: Zur Emergenz syntaktischer Struktur*. Max Niemeyer Verlag.
- Kovari, Geoffrey. 1984. *Studien zum germanischen Artikel: Entstehung und Verwendung des Artikels im Gotischen*. Wien: Halosar.
- Laake, Signe. 2007. *Nomenfraser i norrønt og norsk*. En diakron analyse. Master's thesis, University of Oslo.
- Lohndal, Terje. 2007. On the structure and development of nominal phrases in Norwegian. In *Nominal determination*, eds. Werner Abraham, Elisabeth Leiss, and Elisabeth Stark, 287–310. Amsterdam: John Benjamins.
- Lundeby, Einar. 1965. *Overbestemt substantiv i norsk: og andre nordiske språk: mit einer deutschen Zusammenfassung*. Universitetsforlaget.
- Nygaard, Marius. 1906. *Norrøn syntax*. Oslo: H. Aschehoug & Company (W. Nygaard). [2nd, unrevised edition, 1966].
- Osthoff, Hermann. 1876. *Zur Geschichte des schwachen deutschen Adjectivums: eine sprachwissenschaftliche Untersuchung*, Vol. 2. Jena: Costenoble.

⁶ «xNP» represents some unspecified nominal projection, e.g. NP or DP; relevant innovations are underlined.

⁷ On this latter point, see also Osthoff (1876); Curme (1910); Kovari (1984); Ringe (2006); Ratkus (2011); Rehn (2018).

- Perridon, Harry. 1996. Noun phrases in Runic Swedish. In *The Nordic Languages and Modern Linguistics*, vol. 9: *Proceedings of The Ninth International Conference of Nordic and General Linguistics*, ed. Kjartan G. Ottóson et al., 248–61. Oslo: Novus Forlag.
- Perridon, Harry, and Petra Sleeman. 2011. The noun phrase in Germanic and Romance. In *The noun phrase in Romance and Germanic*, eds. Harry Perridon and Petra Sleeman, 1–21. Amsterdam: John Benjamins.
- Ratkus, Arturas. 2011. *The adjective inflection in Gothic and early Germanic: Structure and development*. PhD diss, University of Cambridge.
- Rehn, Alexandra. 2018. *Adjectives and the Syntax of German(ic) DPs – a diachronic and dialectal Perspective*. PhD diss, University of Konstanz.
- Rießler, Michael. 2016. *Adjective attribution*. Berlin: Language Science Press.
- Ringe, Donald. 2006. *A Linguistic History of English: Volume I, From Proto-Indo-European to Proto-Germanic*. Oxford Scholarship Online.
- Roehrs, Dorian, and Christopher D. Sapp. 2004. The rise of the suffixal article in the early North Germanic DP. In *Proceedings of WECOL 2004*, eds. Michal Temkin Martínez, Asier Alcázar, and Roberto Mayoral Hernández, 290–301. Department of Linguistics, California State University.
- Skrzypek, Dominika. 2009. The formation of the definite article in the Nordic languages. *Lingua Posnaniensis* 51: 65–76.
- Skrzypek, Dominika. 2010. *Between a demonstrative and an article. The status of -in in Old Swedish*. *Folia Scandinavica* 11: 145–162.
- Stroh-Wollin, Ulla. 2009. On the development of definiteness markers in Scandinavian. *Working Papers in Scandinavian Syntax* 83: 1–25.
- Stroh-Wollin, Ulla. 2015. Från gammal man till den gamle mannen: Definitmarkering i fornsvenska nominalfraser med adjektivattribut. *Arkiv för nordisk filologi* 130: 101–138.
- Törnqvist, Nils. 1974. Zur Geschichte der deutschen Adjektivflexion. *Neuphilologische Mitteilungen* 75 (2): 317–331.

**Morphological simplification in the late Northumbrian dialect:
The case of weak verbs class II**

Elisa Ramírez Pérez
Cardiff University
ramirezperez@cardiff.ac.uk

My paper will present the state of the second class of Old English weak verbs in the glosses to St Matthew’s Gospels in both the *Lindisfarne Gospels* and *Rushworth Gospels* in relation to the ultimate deletion of these verbs’ characteristic thematic vowel, namely the *-i-* formative. Although the loss of this medial vowel is generally considered to be a Middle English characteristic (Lass, 2006: 127-128; Thomason and Kaufman 1988: 293), the evidence presented in this paper will point towards an earlier and geographically-specific start for this simplification process, since it will be seen that the late Northumbrian glosses to the *Lindisfarne Gospels* display a rather advanced stage of *-i-* deletion, especially when compared to more Southern texts, as exemplified by data from the Mercian glosses to the *Rushworth Gospels*.

In trying to understand the causes leading to the disappearance of the *-i-* formative, my PhD project will first consider language internal phenomena such as phonological attrition and medial vowel deletion as triggers. Since this approach could prove unsuccessful to individually account for the deletion of *-i-* at this early stage – it should be noted that Southern dialects still preserved this element well into the Middle English period (Mossé, 1952: 79) –, the language contact situation from the 9th century onwards between Old English and Old Norse will also be considered as a plausible contributing factor for the said simplification, especially when bearing in mind that Old Norse verbal counterparts lacked a phonologically salient theme vowel.

References

- Lass, R., (2006) Phonology & Morphology. In: N. Blacke (ed) *The Cambridge History of the English Language: Volume II 1066 – 1476*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Mossé, F., (1952) *A Handbook of Middle English*. Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins Press.
- Thomason, S.G. & Kaufman, T., (1988) *Language Contact, Creolization, and Genetic Linguistics*. Oxford: University of California Press.

Absolute constructions in Greek

Vassilios Spyropoulos

National and Kapodistrian University of Athens

vspyrop@phil.uoa.gr

Absolute constructions in Ancient Greek involved a clausal constituent with a participial verb form, the subject of which was not an element of the matrix clause. This subject appeared regularly in the genitive case, but also in accusative and nominative (rarely and perhaps irregularly in dative) (Schwyzer & Debrunner 1950). Such constructions had a very wide distribution as alternatives to adjunct clauses:

- (1) a. Kyros anebē: epi ta ore:
Cyrus-NOM went.up-PST.3SG on the mountains-ACC
 oudenos kō:lyontos
nobody-MSC.SG.GEN block-PRTC.MSC.SG.GEN
‘Cyrus went up the mountains, because nobody blocked him’
- b. hoti misthon aito:sin
that salary-ACC claim-3PL
hō:s ... o:pheleian esomenē:n
PRT benefit-ACC be-PRTC.FUT.FEM.SG.ACC
‘that they demanded a salary, so that there will be a benefit...’
- c. hale:s genomenē: pa:sa he: hella:s
in.mass-FEM.SG.NOM be-PRTC.FEM.SG.NOM all the Hellas-NOM
khe:r megale: synagetai
hand-NOM big-FEM.SG.NOM draw.together-MEDPASS.3SG
‘If all Greece comes together, a great number of men will be gathered’

Absolute participial constructions gradually disappeared from the post-Classical period onwards (Horrocks 2010), so that in Modern Greek the only absolute construction attested is a gerundival/converbial construction with a nominative subject (Holton et al. 2012, Tsimpli 2000, Kotzoglou 2016):

- (2) [yirizondas i maria apo tin Patra]
 come.back-GER the Maria-NOM from the Patra
 efiya eyo
 leave-PST.1SG 1-SG.NOM
 ‘As soon as Maria came back from Patras, I left’

One of the issues that these constructions raise is the source of the case of the subject. I will propose that AGr absolute participial constructions involved a prepositional structure. More specifically, based on a decomposition analysis of AGr prepositional constructions (Spyropoulos 2017), according to which the case of the prepositional complement was assigned by a p_{CASE} functional head in the prepositional functional skeleton, I will argue that absolute participial constructions involved the same p_{CASE} head taking the participial clause as a complement and assigning the relevant case to its subject. I will then put forward the hypothesis that the loss of the absolute participial constructions was connected to the demise of the case – function transparency and the subsequent neutralization of case distinctions in the prepositional constructions (Luraghi 2003, Bortone 2010), which resulted in the under-specification of the feature content of the p_{CASE} head.

References

- Bortone, Pietro. 2010. *Greek Prepositions: From Antiquity to Present*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Holton David, Peter Mackridge, Irene Philippaki-Warbuton & Vassilios Spyropoulos. 2012. *Greek: A Comprehensive Grammar*. Second Revised Edition. London: Routledge.
- Horrocks, Geoffrey. 2010. *Greek: A History of the Language and its People*. 2nd Edition. Oxford: Wiley & Blackwell.
- Kotzoglou, George. 2016. Control in Greek gerunds: Implicit arguments and other factors. In Marina Mattheoudakis & Katerina Nikolaidis (eds.), *Selected Papers on Theoretical and Applied Linguistics from ISTAL 2013*, 166-185. Aristotle University of Thessaloniki [<http://ejournals.lib.auth.gr/thal/issue/view/832>]
- Luraghi, Silvia. 2003. *On the Meaning of Prepositions and Cases*. Amsterdam: John Benjamins.
- Schwyzler, Eduard & Albert Debrunner. 1950. *Griechische Grammatik. Zweiter Band: Syntax und Syntaktische Stilistik*. München: C. H. Beck'sche Verlagsbuchhandlung.
- Spyropoulos, Vassilios. 2017. Decomposing prepositions: Function, case and prepositional prefixation in Ancient Greek. Paper presented at *Morphosyntactic Variation in Adpositions*, Queens' College, University of Cambridge, 8-9 May 2017.
- Tsimpli, Ianthi-Maria. 2000. Gerunds in Greek. *Journal of Greek Linguistics* 1, 133-169.

Gender-assignment as a marker of Different Object Marking

Letizia Vezzosi

University of Florence

letizia.vezzosi@unifi.it

In the last decades, the scientific debate has focused on the so-called ‘Differential Object Marking’ (henceforth DOM), namely the phenomenon whereby direct object may be case-marked depending on its semantic and pragmatic properties, both in a theoretical (see Ackerman – Moore 2001; Pustejovsky 2000) and functional-typological perspective (see Barddal 2015; Bossong 1998; Lazard 2003a-b, just to quote few). According to these studies, properties influencing differential object marking include animacy, definiteness, specificity and topicality (cf. among others, Bossong 1985, 1998; Comrie 1979; Malchukov 2008). It has been claimed that DOM represents a grammatical strategy to mark the marked status of highly definite and animate direct objects (cf. markedness approach; see Croft 1988, 2003) or a high degree of affectedness (cf. indexing approach; see Næss 2004, 2007) or the pragmatic role of secondary topic (Nikolaeva & Darymple 2007). The feature taken into account in their analyses is always case-marking.

In the present paper on the basis of Old English data I would like to investigate the role played by gender assignment in DOM. Like other Germanic languages, Old English is characterized by a formal gender assignment system based and differentiates feminine, masculine and neuter nouns. However, it is less widely acknowledged, yet undeniable, that there are nouns with more than one assigned gender. This phenomenon has been connected with the degree of individuation a noun has in a specific textual context (Vezzosi 2007). Given that animacy, definiteness, topicality are all properties that might be relevant in gender-assignment, ultimately I will show the relationships between an ‘deviant’ gender of a given noun and its grammatical role (subject vs. object). More precisely, gender assignment ultimately depends on semantic roles in that un-prototypical direct objects, or objects with particular semantic properties can favour the assignment of a different gender from the grammatical one pertaining to the corresponding noun. This result is relevant in terms of reconstruction of (Proto-)Indo-European alignment system since it would support the assumption that alignment in Proto-Indo-European was semantically based (Pooth – Kerkhof – Kulikov – Barddal 2019).

References

- Ackerman, F. – J. Moore. 2001. *Proto-properties and Grammatical Encoding: A Correspondence Theory of Argument Selection*. Stanford: CSLI Publications.
- Barddal, Johanna. 2015. “Valency Classes in Icelandic: Oblique Subjects, Oblique Ambitransitives and the Actional Passive.” In Malchukov –Comrie (eds.) *Valency Classes in the Worlds’ Languages*. Berlin/New York: Mouton De Gruyter: 367–416.

- Pooth, Roland A., Peter Alexander Kerkhof, Leonid Kulikov, and Johanna Barddal. 2019. "The Origin of Non-canonical Case Marking of Subjects in proto-indo-European: Accusative, Ergative, or Semantic Alignment." *Indogermanische Forschungen* (2019).
- Bossong, Georg. 1985. *Differentielle Objektmarkierung in den Neuiranischen Sprachen*. Tübingen: Narr.
- Bossong, Georg. 1998. "Le marquage différentiel de l'objet dans les langues d'Europe". In Feuillet, Jack (ed.) *Actance et valence dans les langues d'Europe*. Berlin/New York : Mouton de Gruyter : 193-258.
- Comrie, Bernard. 1979. "Definite and animate objects: a natural class". *Linguistica Silesiana* 3: 15-21.
- Croft, William. 1988. "Agreement vs. case Marking in direct objects". In Barlow Michael and Charles Ferguson (eds.) *Agreement in natural languages*. Chicago: CSLI: 159-179.
- Croft, William. 2003. *Typology and universals*. II ed. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Kulikov, Leonid. 2006. "Case systems in a diachronic perspective: A typo-logical sketch". In Kulikov – Malchukov – de Swart (eds.) *Case, Valency and Transitivity*. Amsterdam/Philadelphia: John Benjamins Publishing Company: 23–47.
- Lazard, G. 2003a. "Transitivity revisited as an example of a more strict approach in typological research" . *Folia Linguistica* 36(3-4), 141–190.
- Lazard, G. 2003b. "What is an object in a crosslinguistic perspective?". In Fiorentina (ed.) *Romance Objects: Transitivity in Romance Languages*. Berlin/New York: Mouton de Gruyter: 1–16.
- Malchukov, A. 2008. "Animacy and asymmetries in differential case marking". *Lingua* 118: 203–221.
- Næss, Åshild. 2004. "What markedness marks: the markedness problem with direct object". *Lingua* 114: 1186-1212.
- Næss, Åshild. 2007. *Prototypical transitivity*. Amsterdam-Philadelphia: John Benjamins.
- Nikolaeva, Irina and Mary Darymple. 2007. *Topicality and nonsubject marking: Agreement, casemarking, and grammatical function*. Ms. Centre for Linguistics and Philology. Oxford University.
- Pustejovsky, J. 2000. "Lexical shadowing and argument closure". In Ravin – Leacock (eds.) *Polysemy: Theoretical and Computational Approaches*. Oxford: Oxford University Press: 68–90.
- Vezzosi, Letizia. 2007. "Gender Assignment in Old English". In Gotti *et al.* (eds.) *English Historical Linguistics 2006. Vol. I: Syntax and Morphology*. Amsterdam / Philadelphia: Benjamins: 89-108.

Why we should not expect too much from computational-phylogenetic dates

Igor Yanovich

Universität Tübingen

igor.yanovich@gmail.com

In this talk, I discuss one particular aspect of computational phylogenetics: its use for dating proto-languages. Linguistic-phylogenetic papers still commonly claim to have derived a specific date for some proto-language's breakup. But such results to date are, however, statistically unfounded. For example, Kolipakam et al. (2018) write in their abstract that "our results indicate that the Dravidian language family is approximately 4500 years old", basing this on the mean and median of their inferences. The statistically proper inference, however, is to use the 95% HPDI, which is... between 2800 and >7000 years ago. Obviously, this does not really tell us much new about Proto-Dravidian.

Unfortunately, such wide intervals is what we are bound to get, resulting from (i) scarceness of data close to the root of the tree, and (ii) sincere attempts to properly account for the variation in language-change rates. I illustrate using an analysis Ratliff, Taguchi, Wu and I did of Hmong-Mien. We measured time in the abstract units of time "expected number of changes in one feature along the branch". One typical analysis puts the root age between 0.029 and 0.059 average changes in one feature. (The number is low because we use binarized features.) More than half of this variability is due to the last two branches merging in Proto-Hmong-Mien. Other analyses are similarly uncertain, but because all of them use reasonable, but differing assumptions, as a group they only increase our uncertainty further.

Such effects are not specific to Hmong-Mien. IE results include 6100-9500 BP in Bouckaert et al. (2012), and three pairs of 5760-8115, 6244-8766, and 8370-11695 BP in Rama (2018) on the same data with three minimally different models.

Phylogenetics tries its best to account for our uncertainty in which specific changes hap-pened, on which branch, what the rates of change were, what the family tree was... Multiplying uncertainties results in a very wide temporal estimate. It is this wide estimate that we should embrace. Resolving it would take work that computation alone cannot perform.

References

- Bouckaert, R., Lemey, P., Dunn, M., Greenhill, S. J., Alekseyenko, A. V., Drummond, A. J., Gray, R. D., Suchard, M. A., and Atkinson, Q. D. (2012). Mapping the origins and expansion of the Indo-European language family. *Science*, 337:957–960.
- Kolipakam, V., Jordan, F. M., Dunn, M., Greenhill, S. J., Bouckaert, R., Gray, R. D., and Verkerk, A. (2018). A Bayesian phylogenetic study of the Dravidian language family. *Proceedings of the Royal*

Society B, 5(3):171504.

Rama, T. (2018). Three tree priors and five datasets. A study of Indo-European phylogenetics. *Language Dynamics and Change*, 8(2):182–218.
