Book reviews

The edited volume *Productive patterns in phraseology and construction grammar* is a collection of papers presented at a theme session of the 2019 EURO-PHRAS conference. The title of the volume already points towards the main topic and the different perspectives taken on this topic that the volume aims to bring together: As **Carmen Mellado Blanco** points out in her introductory paper, entitled "Phraseology, patterns and Construction Grammar", the concept of pattern plays a key role both in phraseology and in Construction Grammar (CxG). Both frameworks emphasize the high degree of idiomaticity in language. There are various different definitions of the term *pattern*, some of which are reviewed in the introductory article. While some use the term quasi-synonymously with *phraseologism*, others define patterns as formal structures inherently linked to a meaning, which closely resembles the definition of constructions in CxG. Mellado Blanco sketches a number of areas where CxG and phraseology can cross-fertilize each other, and also discusses another key concept mentioned in the title of the volume: productivity. Following Barðdal (2008), she distinguishes two lines of reasoning on productivity, one that sees productivity as regularity, and another one that conceives of productivity as extensibility. The latter notion of productivity is closely related to analogy, which also plays a major role in the emergence of semi-schematic constructions from phraseologisms, as in the case of "anti-proverbs" (Mieder 2004) such as *Where there's a will, there's a lawsuit* or "snowclones" such as *X is the new Y* (Bergs 2019, Ungerer & Hartmann 2020). Mellado Blanco argues that variants of CxG "constitute an ideal framework for studying phraseological variation along the lexis-grammar continuum" (p. 12), as CxG approaches variation holistically in terms of productivity, analogy, regularity, and schematicity.

The first contribution of the volume, by **Pedro Ivorra Ordines**, is entitled "Comparative constructional idioms: A corpus-based study of the creativity of the [*más feo que* X] construction". Based on the webcorpus *esTenTen18*, he investigates the pattern [*más feo que* X], as in *más feo que tú* 'uglier than you', mainly focusing on creative uses such as *más fea que pegar a un padre con un calcetín sudado* 'uglier than hitting a father with a sweaty sock', which is itself an instance of the highly frequent [*más feo que pegarle a un padre*] subconstruction. On a theoretical level, Ivorra Ordines' paper contributes to the discussion on the

respective roles of type and token frequency in productivity: He argues that especially in the case of low-level constructions, token frequency is very important for determining how productive a construction can be and can thus serve as an index of productivity.

The paper by **Marie Kopřinová**, entitled "Between phraseology and conversational routines. Using spoken Czech corpora", discusses how *n*-grams can be used to uncover conversational routines. More specifically, trigrams to tetragrams starting with *to je* 'it is' are searched for structures that are repeated in a conversation and that can thus give clues to patterns typical for spoken language. The results are analyzed by categorizing them in terms of the parts of speech *to je* combines with and in terms of the semantic and pragmatic functions they fulfill.

Fabio Mollica & Sören Stumpf investigate "Families of constructions in German", presenting "A corpus-based study of constructional phrasemes with the pattern [X$_{NP}$ attribute]". Examples of this pattern include *Politikverdrossenheit pur* 'pure disenchantment with politics', *Politikerin durch und durch* 'politician through and through' or *Politik, wie sie im Buche steht* 'a textbook example of politics'. They argue that these different patterns form a family of constructions sharing formal and semantic-pragmatic characteristics. They also conduct quantitative and qualitative analyses of the slot fillers of the individual constructions, showing that e.g., *pur* usually combines with abstract concepts, while *par excellence* combines with nouns denoting persons.

In the paper "Constructional phrasemes in Modern Greek: Structure and meaning", **Elizaveta Onufrieva** investigates 50 patterns with open slots based on the webcorpus *elTenTen14*. She first discusses their structure and their semantics, also addressing the question of where they can be placed on the syntax-lexicon continuum. She argues that "different structural types of constructional phrasemes form a continuum of their own" (p. 116), ranging from constructional phrasemes with function words via constructional phrasemes with bleached content words to constructional phrasemes with content words. Similar to Mollica & Stumpf, but without explicitly mentioning the concept of construction families, she also argues that different constructional phrasemes can have a similar meaning and therefore be grouped on the basis of their semantics; as a case study, she zooms in on constructional phrasemes denoting the concept of "multitude".

Valentina Piunno presents a corpus study of Italian intensification patterns in her paper "Coordinated constructional intensifiers: Patterns, function and productivity". In particular, she focuses on binomial constructions like *bello e buono* (lit. 'beautiful and good'), *vivo e vegato* (lit. 'alive and thriving') in which two coordinated items are either (near-)synonymous or semantically closely related. She distinguishes between completely filled and partially filled

intensifying constructions, the latter including *puro e semplice/santo/naturale*... 'pure and simple/saint/natural...' or *lungo e complesso/faticoso/difficile*... 'long and complex/strenuous/difficult...'. Following Traugott & Trousdale's (2013) framework, she argues that the different patterns she investigates differ in their degree of lexicalization, and arguably also occupy different places on a continuum of constructionalization.

Kathrin Steyer's paper "Preposition-noun combinations of TIME in German. A pattern-based approach to minimal phraseological units" presents a corpus-based analysis of German patterns like *am Ende* 'at (the) end' or *for Sekunden* 'for seconds'. She argues that such preposition-noun combinations can be seen both as autonomous units and as parts of larger lexical units and patterns. Steyer summarizes some of the main results of the project "Preposition-noun combinations in context" conducted at the Leibniz Institute for the German Language in Mannheim and presents a case study of the pattern *für* $N_{kalendarisch\_metrisch}$ 'for $N_{calendrical\_metric}$', e.g., *für Minuten* 'for minutes', *für Jahrhunderte* 'for centuries', including extension patterns like *für zehn Sekunden* 'for ten seconds'. She shows that in some contexts these patterns also fulfill discursive functions, e.g., by expressing a speaker's subjective stance on a situation.

While the first six papers discuss productive patterns from a monolingual perspective, the remaining five articles take a multilingual approach. **Dimitrij Dobrovol'skij & Ludmila Pöppel** investigate "Russian constructions with *nu i* in parallel corpora", with a view to the theoretical question of how language-specific constructions are. They first introduce a family of constructions with *nu i* X (roughly: 'well and X') and then search for English, German, and Swedish equivalents in parallel corpora, using the Russian National Corpus as well as parallel corpora available via the corpus query system SketchEngine. They show that the different subconstructions can be categorized in two groups, one denoting 'surprise', the other 'indifference'. They also show that the constructions that can be detected from their data range from full idioms to free word combinations, which shows that "we are dealing with a gradual transition from free word combinations to phraseology." (p. 211)

Laura Giacomini's paper "Phraseology in technical texts. A frame-based approach to multiword term analysis and extraction" aims at implementing a method for extracting terms and variants from a corpus of technical texts in a frame-based way. By multiword terms, she means compounds like *low-density* as well as specialized phrasemes like *insulating layer*. They can vary in terms of morphology, syntax, and orthography (e.g., German *Dachdämming* 'roof insulation' – *Dämmung des Daches* 'insulation of the roof'). Following Faber's (e.g., 2012) Frame-Based Terminology approach in a modified way that allows for taking variants into account, Giacomini extracts clusters of multi-word terms

from annotated corpus data, identifying semantically similar terms by means of so-called frame elements. As a proof of concept, she discusses how this approach has been applied to a corpus of technical texts dealing with insulation processes.

The paper "Cross-language transfer of formulae. The case of English letters" by **Martina Häcker** is situated at the interface of phraseology and contact linguistics. Drawing on a database of Middle English family correspondences, she carves out recurrent formulae, comparing the results for the time before and after the Norman conquest, showing that many formulae used in letters can be identified as calques of French formulae. She hypothesizes that "after a period of *ad hoc* translations by bilinguals [...] the formulae became conventionalized and spread quickly." (p. 235)

Zuriñe Sanz-Villar's paper "German-into-Basque translation of verbal patterns. Analyzing trainee translators' outputs" uses a learner translator corpus compiled specifically for this study to investigate how verbal patterns like *zu etwas beitragen* 'contribute to something' are translated from German into Basque, and which problems novice translators face when encountering such patterns. She shows that apart from the linguistic features of the input patterns, interferences from the source language or other languages as well as the use of Machine Translation technology influence the results.

The final paper of the volume, by **Lena Stutz & Rita Finkbeiner**, is entitled "*Veni, vidi, veggie.* A contrastive corpus linguistic analysis of the phraseological construction *Veni, vidi,* X and its German equivalent X *kam, sah und* Y". Similar to other papers in the volume, they focus on the open slots, following a heuristic proposed by Stumpf (2016), who suggests a distinction between modificatory patterns, i.e., lexically fixed phrasemes where one lexical position is modified occasionally (in less than 50% of all cases, in his approach) on the one hand and true phraseological schemas on the other. For the Latin pattern as used in German data (the German Reference Corpus), they show that in 69% of all cases, the original Caesar quote *Veni, vidi, vici* ('I came, saw, and conquered') is used; in [X *kam, sah und* Y], by contrast, the Y slot is filled by a lexical item other than *siegte* ('won', which is commonly used in the German translation of the quote) in about 60% of all cases. They show that the items in the Y slot can be grouped in four categories: verbs roughly synonymous with *siegen* 'to win'; verbs denoting a successful accomplishment; verbs that denote a more passive behavior, thus counteracting the climactic structure of the quote; and finally, verbs that show a strong semantic contrast to *siegen*.

Taken together, the papers in this volume make a convincing case for the combination of phraseology and Construction Grammar, and they show that it is worthwhile to explore the continuum from word combinations via lexically fixed patterns to patterns with an open slot. The case studies presented in this

volume connect nicely to a variety of topics that have become increasingly important in recent constructionist approaches, e.g., research on linguistic creativity (e.g., Bergs 2019) or the application of Construction Grammar in cross-linguistic research (e.g., Boas (ed.) 2010). Most of the papers take a largely explorative approach, which stands to reason given the subject matter. Some papers take a more systematic approach in the analysis of their data than others, but nevertheless, the quality of the contributions is consistently very high. While some of the contributions arguably stand out as theoretically and/or methodologically particularly original and innovative (e.g., Ivorra Ordines, Mollica & Stumpf, and Stutz & Finkbeiner), all papers in the volume contribute important conceptual ideas, methodological considerations, and empirical findings to the scientific investigation of phraseological patterns from a constructionist perspective. A minor point of criticism is that the concept of productivity could have been discussed in a bit more detail in the individual papers. Here, it could be worthwhile for constructionist approaches to phraseology to engage with methodological approaches that have been developed in research on morphological (e.g., Baayen 2009) and syntactic productivity (e.g., Zeldes 2012). While productivity remains a problematic concept with many different possible definitions, such methods could open up possibilities to compare the degree to which constructions are lexically fixed or extend to new cases in a more principled way. But this only shows that all in all, Carmen Mellado Blanco's volume is an ideal starting point for extending the dialogue not only between phraseology and Construction Grammar, but also between constructionist approaches to phraseology and other empirical and usage-based work in linguistics.

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