



LINGUISTICS SPRING SCHOOL OCTOBER 13-24, 2025 UFJF | UFMG

A lineage-based, typological approach to construction grammar

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What does a construction grammar look like that applies across all languages and is grounded in the dynamics of conversational interaction over time? I argue here that a language is a historical entity, bounded in space and time. Grammatical forms and categories in a language are lineages of uses (replications) in discourse of the form or category. Language use is primarily the verbalization of experience by speakers for other speakers. Constructions should be initially defined as a function expressed in form (the onomasiological approach). The functional framework is based on Chafe's theory of verbalization. Constructions in particular languages can be analyzed in typological terms by relating their form and function via typological comparative concepts. The internal structure of constructions is simply the part-whole relation linking constructions to their construction elements (CEs). Syntactic structure is "flat", that is, nonrecursive. The construction is organized as a complex, probabilistic mapping from morphosyntactic forms in syntactic space onto functions (experiences) in conceptual space.

Lecture 1 – Lineage-based linguistics and an evolutionary framework for language

Croft, W. To appear. Lineage-based linguistics. *Linguistic worlds and social minds: what language documentation and linguistic diversity can tell us about the nature and origin of language*, ed. Wayan Arka, Danielle Barth and Henrik Bergqvist. Oxford: Oxford University Press. Available at <http://www.unm.edu/~wcroft/Papers/Lineage-based.pdf>.

Lecture 2 – The verbalization of experience and a functional framework for constructions

Croft, W. 2007. The origins of grammar in the verbalization of experience. *Cognitive Linguistics* 18.339-82.

Croft, W. 2010. The origins of grammaticalization in the verbalization of experience. *Linguistics* 48.1-48.

Croft, W. and Jens E. L. Van Gysel. To appear. Linguistic typology in construction grammar terms. *International Encyclopedia of Language and Linguistics*, ed. Hilary Nesi and Petar Milin. Available at <http://www.unm.edu/~wcroft/Papers/Elsevier-TypologyCxG.pdf>.

Lecture 3 – Comparative concepts, language-specific categories, and distributional analysis

Croft, W. 2001. *Radical Construction Grammar: syntactic theory in typological perspective*, chapter 1. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Croft, W. To appear. Comparative concepts. *International Encyclopedia of Language and Linguistics*, ed. Hilary Nesi and Petar Milin. Available at <http://www.unm.edu/~wcroft/Papers/Elsevier-comparative-concepts.pdf>.

Lecture 4 – The internal structure of constructions: syntactic roles, symbolic relations and flat syntax

Croft, W. 2021. *Ten lectures on construction grammar and typology*, chapter 4. Leiden: Brill.

Croft, W. To appear. Flat syntax: a practical annotation scheme—and its theoretical implications. Available at <http://www.unm.edu/~wcroft/Papers/Flat-syntax.pdf>.

Lecture 5 – Semantic maps, conceptual spaces, multidimensional analysis and syntactic space

Croft, W. Relativity, linguistic variation and language universals. *CogniTextes* 4.303 Available at <http://cognitextes.revues.org/303/>.

Croft, W. *Ten lectures on construction grammar and typology*, chapter 5. Leiden: Brill.