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Information Structure and Syntactic Change

A number of papers presented at the workshop on "Clausal Connectives in the History of English" at the 13th ICEHL in Vienna, now published in the series Current Issues in Linguistic Theory by Benjamins (Lenker and Meurman-Solin 2007), illustrate how essential for our understanding of the history of connectives it is to examine the discourse factors which determine the position of subordinate clauses on both the local and the global levels of text (see Claridge, González-Cruz and Lenker in particular). These findings as well as a growing interest in benefiting fully from major advances in diachronic corpus linguistics (as regards both a wider range of quantitatively and qualitatively representative corpora and better tools for data retrieval and analysis) have motivated us to invite scholars to come together to explore further issues related to the role of information processing in various types of syntactic change (see, for example, Ward and Birner 2004, 2006).

We would like to invite colleagues to contact us with suggestions on topics related to the general theme which they would like to offer a paper on (extraposition, topicalization, dislocation, clefting, *there*-existentials, etc.). We would be happy to include papers representing a wide variety of theoretical and methodological approaches ranging from those developed by corpus linguistics to historical text-linguistics, historical pragmatics, historical stylistics, historical sociolinguistics and cognitive linguistics. We hope the workshop will succeed in providing new information not only on the variable of genre but also on the conditioning of varying degrees of linguistic and stylistic literacy and the influence of contact, i.e. the role of borrowed or recontextualized discourse in information structure. We would also be interested in contributions on how variation in linguistic realizations analysed in terms of the continuum from maximally elaborated to maximally compressed relates to information structure.

The programme will chiefly consist of half-hour presentations (20 min + 10 min for questions and comments) and a general discussion at the end. We will extend the time for discussion after each individual paper if the general time-frame for workshops in Munich makes this possible. Written papers (or their shorter versions) should be handed in by 28 July 2008, so that they can be distributed to all the participants in advance. This will permit us to discuss the papers thoroughly at the workshop and also to start work towards the publication of the papers as early as October-November 2008.

Speakers:

1. Tine **Breban**, Katholieke Universiteit Leuven (Belgium)
2. Ans **van Kemenade** and Marit **Westergaard**, Radboud University, Nijmegen (Netherlands) and University of Tromsø (Norway)
3. Bettelou **Los**, Radboud University, Nijmegen (Netherlands)
4. Anneli **Meurman-Solin**, University of Helsinki (Finland)
5. Javier **Pérez-Guerra**, University of Vigo (Spain)
6. Toril **Swan**, University of Tromsø (Norway)
7. Ann **Taylor** and Susan **Pintzuk**, University of York (United Kingdom)
8. Olga **Timofeeva**, University of Helsinki (Finland)
9. Turo **Vartiainen**, University of Helsinki (Finland)

References:

- Claridge, Claudia 2007. Conditionals in Early Modern English texts. In Lenker and Meurman-Solin, 229-254.
- González-Cruz, Ana I. 2007. On the subjectification of adverbial clause connectives: Semantic and pragmatic considerations in the development of *while*-clauses. In Lenker and Meurman-Solin, 145-166.
- Lenker, Ursula 2007. *Forhwi* - because: Shifting deictics in the history of English causal connection. In Lenker and Meurman-Solin, 193-227.
- Lenker, Ursula and Anneli Meurman-Solin 2007. *Connectives in the History of English* (Current Issues in Linguistic Theory, 283). Amsterdam: Benjamins.
- Ward, Gregory and Betty J. Birner 2004. Information Structure. In *Handbook of Pragmatics*, edited by Laurence R. Horn and Gregory Ward. Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 153-174. <<http://www.ling.northwestern.edu/~ward/HoPb.pdf>>
- Ward, Gregory and Betty J. Birner 2006. Information Structure. In *Handbook of English Linguistics*, edited by Bas Aarts and April McMahon. Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 291-317.

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