

Analytical dimensions and the functional map of Parts-of-Speech

Kees Hengeveld & Eva van Lier, University of Amsterdam

The meaning of linguistic units can be analyzed at two different levels. In Functional Discourse Grammar (Hengeveld & Mackenzie, forthcoming), the *Interpersonal* level gives a formal representation of linguistic units in terms of two basic communicative functions, called ascriptive acts and referential acts. At the *Representational* level, linguistic units are described in terms of their semantic designation. Units at the Representational level may correspond to different Interpersonal functions. Furthermore, each linguistic unit consists of an obligatory part, its head, and an optional modifier.

In this paper (cf. Hengeveld & Van Lier, submitted), we use the distinction between the Interpersonal and the Representational levels of analysis on the one hand, and the head-modifier distinction on the other hand, to define the following four possible functions of lexical items:

- (i) The head of a representational unit that is used as an ascriptive act.
- (ii) A representational unit that is used as a modifier of the head of an ascriptive act.
- (iii) The head of a representational unit that is used as a referential act.
- (iv) A representational unit that is used as a modifier of the head of a referential act.

Cross-linguistically, there is considerable variation in terms of the freedom of lexeme classes to express one or more of these four functions (Hengeveld 1992 and Hengeveld et al. 2004). Originally, the constraints on this variation were formulated in terms of the implicational hierarchy below, where the four functions are ordered according to the likelihood that a language would have a specialized lexeme class for the expression of that function (with the chance of specialization increasing to the left).

(i) > (iii) > (iv) > (ii)

In the present paper, however, we argue that this hierarchy is in fact the superficial reflection of a two-dimensional functional map, based on the analytical primitives Head-Modifier and Ascription-Reference, as shown in the figure below:

	Head	Modifier
Ascription	(i)	(ii)
Reference	(iii)	(iv)

Each of the two dimensions independently reflects a predominance relation: (Head > Modifier) and (Ascription > Reference). In addition, the two relations are hierarchically ordered with respect to one another: ((Ascription > Reference) > (Head > Modifier)).

On the basis of data from a 50-language variety sample, we show that this two-dimensional map approach yields a higher coverage than the original proposal, while still enabling a clear-cut and cross-linguistically comparable description of the mapping of groups of lexemes onto a functional space.

The map that we propose is not a semantic map in the strict sense, because it does not take into account the entity types of the units that express the various functions (cf. Croft 2001, Van Lier 2006). Taking up this point, we will explore the possibilities of enriching our functional map with this third dimension.

References:

- Croft, William 2001: *Radical Construction Grammar*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Hengeveld, Kees 1992: Parts of Speech. In: Michael Fortescue, Peter Harder & Lars Kristoffersen (eds.): *Layered structure and reference in a functional perspective*. Amsterdam/Philadelphia: Benjamins. 29—55.
- Hengeveld, Kees, Jan Rijkhoff & Anna Siewierska. 2004: Parts-of-speech systems and word order. *Journal of Linguistics* 40: 527—570.
- Hengeveld, Kees & Eva van Lier, submitted: 'Lexical and complex heads in Functional Discourse Grammar.'
- Hengeveld, Kees & J. Lachlan Mackenzie, forthcoming: *Functional Discourse Grammar*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Van Lier, Eva 2006: Parts-of-Speech systems and dependent clauses. *Folia Linguistica* 40, 3-4, 239—304.