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# INTRODUCTION: ARGUMENT REALIZATION AND CHANGE

By Michela Cennamo
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## 1. Introductory remarks

Research on the nature of argument structure, its encoding and representation has highlighted the complex interaction among the parameters determining argument realization, whether lexical – reflecting inherent, i.e., the root, and structural aspects of a verb's meaning, i.e., event structures, regarded as non-lexical in some frameworks – or non-lexical, pertaining to the syntactic configurations in which verbs may occur and the properties of arguments.

Different dimensions appear to affect the encoding of a verb's argument(s): (i) semantic, including the *aspectual characteristics of events* (e.g., telicity), *control* (e.g., agentivity), and the *inherent semantics of argument fillers* (e.g., animacy), (ii) syntactic, involving the syntactic constructions in which a given verb may occur with the corresponding meaning variations, if any, and the syntactic heaviness of the pattern realizing the verbal argument(s), (iii) semantico-pragmatic (e.g., definiteness), and (iv) pragmatic, reflecting the encoding of given – new information (Cennamo 2003; 2009; Levin & Rappaport Hovav 2005; Barðdal 2006; 2008; Bentley 2006; Barðdal & Chelliah 2009, among others).

In recent years studies on the lexical semantics-syntax interface have also underlined the role played by the idiosyncratic aspect of a verb's meaning – i.e., the 'root' (Rappaport Hovav & Levin 1998; Levin & Rappaport Hovav 2005, among others) and its roughly equivalent notions, according to the framework adopted, e.g., *qualia* (Pustejovsky 1995; 2011) – in determining argument realization, and the need to investigate the constraints on its interplay and integration with the structural facets of verb meaning (Rappaport Hovav & Levin 1998; Sorace 2000; 2004; 2011; Levin 2004; Levin & Rappaport Hovav 2005, among others).

The issue of the interaction among these different factors is strongly intertwined with the type of generalizations and models of the lexicon-semantics interface – whether projectionist (Rappaport Hovav & Levin 1998; Levin & Rappaport Hovav 2005; Van Valin 2005; in press), constructional (Goldberg 1995; 2006; Jackendoff 1997; Michaelis & Ruppenhofer 2001), neo-constructional (Borer 2004; Erteschik-Shir & Rapoport 2004) or co-compositional (Pustejovsky 1995; 2011), which appear to account more insightfully for the wealth of typological variation encountered, as well as for recurrent patterns of regularities, i.e., invariance, emerging from cross-linguistic, psycholinguistic and acquisitional studies (Sorace 2000; 2004; 2011; forthcoming; Randall et al. 2004).

The selection of papers we are presenting – partly from the Workshop on *Variation and Change in Argument Realization*, organized by Jóhanna Barðdal and Michela Cennamo in Naples and Capri, 28–30 May 2010, and partly especially invited – aims to explore these issues from a diachronic perspective, bringing together different lines of research on argument structure. It focuses on case-marking, grammatical relations and their reconstructability, voice and (in)transitive alternations, as well as the significance or implications of changes in

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Special Issue: Argument realization and change
Guest editors: Jóhanna Barðdal, Michela Cennamo and Elly van Gelderen

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