

## The constructional network as a dynamic entity. Tracking productivity shifts and internal reorganisations in the network of the Dutch intensifying fake reflexive resultative construction in the 19th to 21st Century

In construction grammar, there is general consensus on the idea that constructions are stored in a taxonomic network. In this hierarchically organised network each level forms an abstraction over all lower-order levels. (cf. the Lexicality-Schematicity Hierarchy in Croft 2003, Barðdal & Gildea 2015 etc.). The diachronic implication of this is that the internal structure of the constructional network is constantly being reconfigured: new generalisations may give rise to new subschemas or cause existing subschemas to move up to a higher level or, conversely, subschemas may marginalise and eventually disappear completely. Such network-internal shifts typically involve changes in schematicity (viz. the level of abstractness) and productivity (viz. the extensibility of the (sub)schema). Some case studies notwithstanding (e.g. Coleman & De Clerck 2011, Van de Velde 2011, Coleman 2015, Torrent 2015), the diachronic aspects of network organisation have not received much attention in the literature.

An ideal candidate to investigate these productivity shifts and internal reorganisations is the Dutch intensifying fake reflexive resultative construction. This construction uses the formal pattern of the fake reflexive [SUBJ V REFL XP] to convey an intensifying meaning, as in (1).

- (1) Ze **lachten zich dood/rot/een bult/een breuk** om die mop.  
'They laughed hard (lit. laughed themselves dead/rotten/a hump/a fracture) at that joke.'

In present-day Dutch, the network of this construction displays an intriguing combination of productive subschemas, allowing for a great deal of linguistic creativity, and conventionalised micro-constructions. Tracing back the recent history of five frequently intensified verbs (*schrikken* 'be startled', *lachen* 'laugh', *piekeren* 'worry', *lopen* 'run', *zich ergeren* 'be annoyed') in the Royal Library's Delpher corpus of historical newspapers, it will be shown that while some verbs have extended their use to new intensifiers, others show remarkably stable collocational preferences. Within a network perspective, such changes cannot happen in isolation: while the verbs are attracting new intensifiers, these intensifiers simultaneously maintain or enter into relations with other verbs. Take the collocation of *zich suf piekeren* in (2).

- (2) Hij **piekerde zich suf** over zijn toekomst.  
'He worried a lot about his future (lit. worried himself drowsy)'

While *piekeren* has always had a clear preference for *suf*, only occasionally pairing up with other intensifiers, *suf* has not been idly sitting by. In the early 20<sup>th</sup> Century, it was primarily combined with mental verbs like *piekeren*, but it has become one of the most flexible intensifiers, occurring with over 50 different verbs. A much more flexible verb is *zich ergeren*, which has always been able to combine with many intensifiers. At the same time, it can also form collocations with "exclusive" intensifiers like *zich groen en geel ergeren* (3).

- (1) Ik heb **me groen en geel geërgerd** aan jouw gedrag.  
'I was very annoyed by your behaviour (lit. annoyed myself green and yellow).'

By focusing on the changes within both the verb- and the intensifier-slot at the subschema level, and the influence of their interactions on productivity, this paper aims to provide new insights into the mechanisms that drive constructional network reorganisations.

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