Constructions, ConstructiCons and Constructicography

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The constituting idea of Construction Grammar (CxG) is that language as a whole consists of a network of **constructions**: conventionalized pairings of form and meaning/function. Thus, any linguistic pattern may be described as a construction: words, syntactic structures, discourse patterns, or any combination thereof. By departing from the traditional sharp distinction between grammar and lexicon, CxG has the empirical benefit of straightforwardly capturing patterns that combine lexical and grammatical properties, such as [THE XER THE YER] and [WHAT'S X DOING Y?] (as in *What's this fly doing in my soup?*), which would be problematic borderline cases for traditional grammar+dictionary models. A methodological benefit is that CxG may apply the same basic approach to any kind of linguistic pattern, regardless of which parts of the language system are involved.

The network of constructions that presumably make up a language is called a (mental) **constructiCon**. As an applied counterpart to this theoretical notion, linguists have started developing reference constructiCons, i.e., collections of construction descriptions that serve as "dictionaries of grammatical constructions". There are now such constructiCons in development for half a dozen languages, with more or less advanced plans for a few more. Some of these constructiCons are oriented towards language teaching, others focus on language technology; some are integrated with lexical resources and others are independent. There are also ongoing efforts towards connecting them for crosslinguistic application.

The practice of building (reference) constructiCons is called **constructicography** and may be characterized as a combination of construction grammar and lexicography, or perhaps as doing applied construction grammar under the conditions of lexicography. The task of developing a construction database and devising a user-friendly presentation format is similar in many ways to that of developing an online dictionary. On the other hand, the entries to be described are of a different kind, lacking obvious lexical headwords, and there is not yet an established practice for how to handle them.

My presentation will be a general introduction to the emerging field of constructicography and give an overview of the various approaches pursued by currently ongoing constructiCon projects, including the joint work towards multilingual constructicography.