Workshop proposal
ISLE, Poznan, 18 – 21 September 2016

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Grammar – discourse – context:
Widening the horizon for a theory of grammatical change

This workshop aims to bring together linguists working in different theoretical and methodological frameworks on diachronic language change, who specifically look at processes of **grammatical change in context**. We follow a maximally comprehensive view of *context*. From a pragmatic and discourse-analytic perspective, context may comprise the following (cf. Wodak 2014):

On the **micro-level** (van Dijk 2008)
1) the immediate surrounding text of the communicative event in question, i.e. what has also been called *co-text* (Halliday & Hasan 1985);
2a) the intertextual and interdiscursive relationship between utterances, texts, genres, and discourses;
 b) the intertextual and interdiscursive relationship between spoken and/or written texts and other modes of communication (e.g. pictures, colours, fonts, scripts);
 c) the intertextual and interdiscursive relationship between different varieties and languages that are part of the "world of discourse";
3) the structural context provided by the language system, i.e. the system of interdepencies between lexemes (semantic fields, cognitive domains, collocations, etc.) and grammatical patterns and constructions (Fischer 2007: 116; Möhlig-Falke 2012: 24) which form the linguistic input and underlying cognitive structures (mental grammars) of speakers at any historical stage of the language.

On the **macro-level** (van Dijk 2008)
4) the extralinguistic social, environmental variables and institutional frames of a specific 'context of situation', including multilingual and multicultural settings; and
5) the broader sociopolitical and historical context that discursive practices are embedded in and related to.

We would like to invite contributions by researchers working on processes of grammatical change in discourse, dealing with the role of (selected levels of) context in processes of grammatical change and the issue of modelling this in critically-reflexive ways. We specifically invite contributions focusing on one or more of the following **central questions**:

- What is the influence of (selected levels of) *context* on processes of grammatical change?

- Does a "contextual" approach add to our knowledge and understanding of causes and mechanisms of grammatical change (e.g. analogy, redundancy and the principle of economy (Los 2012), transparency and simplification, subjectification)?
- In which phase do contextual factors influence a process of grammatical change, in the actuation or implementation phase? (MacMahon 1994)
- What triggers language change? Does cultural (contextual) change precede processes of grammatical change, or does grammatical change happen independently of this?
- In which way may a multilingual and multicultural environment influence grammatical change?
- What is the relationship between *text* and *context*? *Text* is what we have available for the analysis of historical stages of a language and of diachronic processes of language change. *Context* needs to be reconstructed and may be up to different interpretations.
- Is it possible to model the influence of context on processes of grammatical change and *how* can this be done?

It will be possible for workshop participants to publish their paper in an anthology edited by Ruth Möhlig-Falke and Kristin Bech in 2017. The submission deadline for articles will be 30 November 2016.

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Workshop schedule:
10:00 – 10:15:   Welcome
10:15 – 10:45:   Paper 1
10:45 – 11:15:   Paper 2
11:15 – 11:45:   Paper 3
11:45 – 12:40:   Lunch
12:45 – 13:15:   Paper 4
13:15 – 13:45:   Paper 5
13:45 – 14:00:   Break
14:00 – 14:30:   Paper 6
14:30 – 15:00:   Paper 7
15:00 – 15:30:   Final discussion

Format: 20 minutes per paper plus 5-10 minutes discussion; half a day

Potential audience size:

About 30-40 people

Procedure for selecting papers and participants:

We will ask some potential contributors directly, and also issue a call for papers. The deadline for submitting abstracts is 1 March 2016 (or any date that the conference committee considers suitable).

Equipment needed:

Projector, and preferably stationary computer