

Per Studia Contrastiva ad Astra: Looking Back, Leaping Forward

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Contrastive linguistics now has a rich history and this workshop is conceived as an opportunity to bridge insights from earlier research with novel research in the field. It aims to offer a platform to revisit key studies and frameworks from the past, understand their impact on current scholarship, and explore how research today can build upon or reinterpret foundational work. As such, this workshop wants to create dialogue between “then” and “now”.

The objectives of the workshop and the papers it offers a forum to include

1. **revisiting seminal work** by encouraging scholars to re-engage with influential works and to discuss their relevance to contrastive linguistics in today’s research landscape;
2. **expanding the scope** of existing studies by applying new methods, using new corpora, involving more languages and/or re-investigating the data or issues from new angles (e.g. synchrony vs. diachrony; pedagogical, theoretical or applied perspectives);
3. **exploring the possible enrichment** of contrastive linguistics studies through intersecting fields such as pragmatics, translation studies, second language acquisition (SLA), cognitive or computational linguistics.

The enrichment by/of contrastive linguistics of/by neighbouring fields is explored in many of the submitted contributions. In her study on requests in English and Swedish, Aijmer explores how contrastive studies can enrich the field of pragmatics, for example. Conversely, a number of other submissions focus on how the field of contrastive linguistics can be enriched by a.o. translation studies, construction grammar and diachronic approaches.

The abstracts submitted by Ebeling & Ebeling, Hasselgård and Egan all explore how insights from corpus-based translation studies can enrich previous findings from contrastive linguistics. Ebeling & Ebeling focus on cognate noun/verb pairs in English and Norwegian, expanding the study to more language pairs than ever before and including bidirectional parallel corpus data. Hasselgård will revisit and build on her own and others’ work on habitual verbal expressions in English and Norwegian and Egan will expand earlier findings from contrastive studies on posture verbs with new insights from parallel English-Norwegian data.

Through a study of argument structure constructions in English and German, Uhrig & Herbst will show how new corpora and a construction grammar approach allow us to better and more fully understand the constructions under scrutiny, both language-specifically and cross-linguistically. The

results of previous contrastive findings on noun phrase density will be refined by insights from Krielke's diachronic study of noun phrase density in English and German in academic writing.

Also focusing on academic writing, Rørvik will revisit and partly replicate seminal work by Fløttum et al. (2006) on first person pronouns by studying the topic in recent Norwegian and English data, thus enabling a diachronic comparison. This study, like the studies by Krielke and Uhrig & Herbst, has pedagogical goals, aiming to contribute to textbook design and the development of (foreign language) teaching materials.

Like Rørvik and Hasselgård, Levin et al. will also revisit earlier work and expand on previous work by using new corpus data from the trilingual Linnaeus University English-German-Swedish corpus, allowing them to refine and adjust earlier contrastive findings. Similarly, Malá's study of noun phrase complexity in in English and Czech children's literature is possible only through new corpus developments, as her research draws on data from the parallel corpus InterCorp, whose most recent editions have been annotated using the universal dependencies framework (Rosen 2023) and includes several measures of syntactic complexity and lexical diversity.

Clearly, the submitted topics cover a diverse range of linguistic phenomena and languages, but they all share the aim of showing the merits of existing studies while showcasing how novel insights, techniques and approaches can enrich past findings.