

Lohmann, Arne (2014): *English Coordinate Constructions. A Processing Perspective on Constituent Order*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press (Studies in English Language). ISBN: 9781107040885

The reviewed book is based on the author's doctoral dissertation, defended at the University of Hamburg in 2012. The slightly revised book is focused on the order of elements in English coordinate constructions on three different levels: the order of compound constituents in copulative compounds, the word order in noun binomials and the order of complex noun phrases within a superordinate nominal phrase. The introduction gives a profound discussion of the aims of the study and their relation to the recent discussion about linearization and ordering of coordinated constructions within linguistics units above simple words and compounds. After a comprehensive overview of previous research on ordering in coordinate constructions (chapter 2) the author presents the influence factors of the order in coordinate constructions, namely (1) pragmatic and semantic variables, (2) information status, and the given-before-new principle, (3) the well-known principle of iconic sequencing, (4) extra-linguistic hierarchy, and (5) conceptual accessibility with a number of different factors which have previously been postulated to influence the order of constituents (e.g. the vertical dimension precedes the horizontal dimension – vertical before horizontal, up before down and right before left, animate before inanimate, positive before negative, concrete before abstract, prototype-first-principle, the me-first principle etc.). Additionally to these, without any doubt important factors, the author furthermore mentions many factors related to general segmental and suprasegmental phonological factors in coordinate constructions such as rhythmical factor (ordering in regard to stressed and unstressed syllables, vowel length, voicing of final consonants, number of initial consonants etc.) and the length and the morphological complexity of the constituents. It is a well-known principle of the linearization constituents that the first element is usually shorter than the second one. The author offers and discusses several length measurements (number of syllables, number of phonemes, number of morphemes and number of syntactic nodes) which can be quantitatively correlated whereas linguistically they bear quite different information. The almost complete synopsis of variables and supposed factors of the ordering of the elements in coordinate constructions based on previous research is the starting point for the genuine English-based empirical analysis of the order of nominal element copulative compounds, coordinated nouns (binomials) and in coordinated complex noun phrases. At the very heart of the reviewed book some heuristically and methodologically interesting procedures are applied by the author to English coordinate

constructions: i) the data base for the in-depth analysis of factors determining the order of nominal elements were acquired from well-balanced and representative corpora of spoken American and British English; ii.) the author strictly differentiates reversible and irreversible constructions, since by means of corpus research the principal gradual behaviour of the reversibility/irreversibility of binomials can be pointed out easily and therefore the author proposes a heuristically motivated linguistic cut-off point, based on the frequency of binomials (e.g. 90% of all cases must be irreversible to be identified as irreversible and secondly they must appear in a corpus at least at a frequency threshold of 10 per 100 million words); iii) the author makes use of multifactorial quantitative analysis – specifically logistic regression as an appropriate tool for the analysis of variation phenomena – to give a more precise picture of the “power” of the above-mentioned determining factors of ordering in coordinate constructions. Indeed, the use of multifactorial methods is highly appreciated, since linguistically and theoretically it is obvious that no one factor plays the crucial role in determining the order of nominal elements, but in fact many different ones; iv) the author gives a detailed account of the operationalization criteria of the discussed factors, which is particularly worth mentioning since these factors are without any doubt in some cases “[...] notoriously hard to operationalise [...]”. The main results regarding the factors influencing the ordering of elements are manifold and some of them have to be highlighted. First of all it appears that on all three investigated levels the pragmatic and semantic constraints and length and frequency differences seem to have the greatest and most significant impact on the ordering of elements. Of other variables among semantic and pragmatic factors, variable iconic sequencing has the strongest effect, whereas length differences and stress patterns yield medium, but in almost all cases not significant effects. Particularly interesting is that the frequency of elements (i.e. more frequent nominal elements are placed before less frequent ones) indeed has the lowest average effect size in all performed analyses (p. 108), but it was found that “the tendency to order constituents of a higher frequency before less frequent ones was found to be statistically significant across all cases studies” (p. 122). This finding is in particular highly interesting for recently intensively discussed frequency-based approaches in linguistics (Bybee 2011, Bybee/Hopper 2001) and generally the relevance of frequency in language production. Finally the author embeds his findings on the ordering of elements in general psycholinguistically motivated language production models and some specific aspects of activation mechanisms in producing binomials.

All in all, the reviewed monograph can be considered both methodologically and theoretically to be a milestone in the research of (English) coordinative constructions. Moreover, it can be used as a starting point and methodological reference point for the analysis of similar problems in other languages. Hopefully the observed empirical results will be integrated in future into deductively formulated hypotheses about the general behaviour of elements in coordinated constructions, accompanied by an synergetic interpretation (cf. Köhler 2005) of the found interrelations.

**References:**

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