

## Cross-linguistic variation in the expression of incrementality and related functions

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The literature on incremental constructions has discussed patterns of colexification involving incrementality, such as the colexification of incrementality and continuation by German "noch" and Modern Hebrew "od", or the colexification of incrementality and comparison by English "more" (König 1991, Greenberg 2010, Umbach 2012, a.o.).

Thomas (2018) discussed attested patterns of colexification of comparative, incremental and continuative (henceforth, CIC) operators in a small sample of 12 languages from 7 genera and observed that of the 5 possible patterns of colexification of the three functions (AAA, AAB, ABA, ABB, ABC), colexification of incrementality with continuation to the exclusion of comparison was unattested. Furthermore, Thomas (2018) observed that under negation, the interpretation of comparative morphology tends to be extended to incrementality and continuation, regardless of patterns of colexification that are attested in positive clauses (see also Greenberg 2010 on "yoter" in Modern Hebrew). In order to explain these tentative generalizations, Thomas (2018) proposed a decompositional analysis of comparison, incrementality and continuation, which posits comparison as the basic function from which the other two are built. Colexification of two or more of these functions is analyzed as underspecification in a realizational approach to morphology and unattested patterns of colexification are explained by blocking (cf. Bobaljik 2012). More recently, Li (2024) revisited Thomas' (2018) cross-linguistic generalizations and proposed an alternative decomposition that offers a better coverage of variation in the use of comparative and continuative expressions.

In this talk, we will discuss some limitations of Thomas' (2018) study and raise questions that should be addressed in a more rigorous typological investigation of CIC functions:

- How does the typology of comparison affect colexification of CIC functions? For instance, are comparison and incrementality ever colexified in languages where comparison is primarily expressed by "exceed"-predicates?
- To what extent should other additive functions and aspectual functions be considered in a typology of CIC colexification? For instance, are expressions that colexify incrementality and repetition more likely to colexify with continuation than with comparison?
- Does colexification affect the interpretation of incrementality? For instance, are incremental operators that are colexified with comparison interpreted the same as incremental operators that are colexified with continuation?

We will also discuss patterns of CIC colexification attested in a broader sample of 50 languages, which we explore using a combination of grammar/dictionary survey and automatic extraction of CIC constructions in a parallel corpus.

References:

- Bobaljik 2012. Universals in comparative morphology: Suppletion, superlatives, and the structure of words. MIT Press
- König 1991. The Meaning of Focus Particles. Routledge.
- Li 2024. Alternative Comparison in Underspecified Degree Operators. Proceedings of SALT 33
- Greenberg 2010. Additivity in the domain of eventualities. Proceedings of SuB 14
- Thomas 2018 Underspecification in Degree Operators. Journal of Semantics 35
- Umbach 2012 Strategies of additivity: German additive noch compared to auch. Lingua 122.