

Rodríguez-Juárez, Carolina. 2025. *Introducción a la alternancia locativa en inglés: Análisis y propuesta de formalización*. Colección Lingüística. Editorial Universidad de Sevilla. 175 pp. ISBN: 978-84-472-2629-0

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The book by Carolina Rodríguez-Juárez presents a study focused on the grammatical analysis of the phenomenon of locative alternation in English, approached from the perspective of a formalized grammar model grounded in functional and cognitive-constructional principles and with a computational orientation. As such, it constitutes a highly current contribution in terms of its topic, theoretical framework, and methodology, given the long-standing relevance of analysing constructions – such as the one examined in this work – within modern linguistic theories. These theories emphasize the interaction among different grammatical components and aim to apply theoretical insights to the processing and understanding of natural language.

More specifically, the aim of this monograph is to present a study of the locative alternation in the English language by reviewing the research conducted on this phenomenon to date. Particular emphasis is placed on studies that analyse these constructions from the perspective of Role and Reference Grammar (RRG) (Van Valin & LaPolla, 1997; Van Valin, 2005), followed by an overview of the approach offered by the Lexical Constructional Model (LCM) (Ruiz de Mendoza & Mairal-Usón, 2008; Mairal-Usón & Ruiz de Mendoza, 2009; Ruiz de Mendoza, 2013), and concluding with the more recent proposal of the Formalized Lexical-Constructional Grammar (FL_CxG) (Cortés-Rodríguez, 2021; Cortés-Rodríguez & Díaz-Galán, 2023).

In Chapter 1, the author provides essential and highly useful information that enables the reader to understand the remainder of the book, as it includes both basic and introductory concepts, as well as their application in the various analyses of locative alternation presented in the subsequent sections. Beginning with Section 1.3, the concept of alternations is introduced, and the three types of alternations identified by Levin (1993) are described: those involving a change in transitivity, those associated with a shift in the way arguments are encoded, and those that permit oblique subjects. Additionally, the types of arguments are examined from the perspective of Role and Reference Grammar (RRG) – including direct core arguments, oblique core arguments, and arguments-adjuncts – as well as from the tradition of the Generative Lexicon (GL) theory of Pustejovsky (1995) and Pustejovsky & Batiukova (2019), which distinguishes among true arguments, default arguments, and shadow arguments. The concept of construction is also discussed from the perspective of Construction Grammar, with particular emphasis on Goldberg's model (1995, 2002, 2006). The value of this introductory chapter must be underscored, as it is fundamental for understanding the different analyses of the locative alternation offered in the work, especially the FL_CxG analysis, which constitutes the main focus of the study and integrates the linguistic insights provided by the earlier analyses of the grammatical phenomenon in question.

Chapter 2 delves into the description and analysis of the phenomenon of locative alternation in the English language by presenting a classification of the four types of alternating constructions grouped under the term locative. Each construction exhibits one variant referred to as the locative and another variant later termed the applicative. The chapter details the classes of verbs involved in each of these constructions – namely, *load/spray*, *clear*, *wipe*, and *swarm* – as well as their semantic connotations, particularly with respect to their potential holistic interpretation, as it also addresses the constraints associated with the second and third arguments of this alternation, with special attention to the feature of definiteness. Regarding the holistic interpretation of one of the arguments in the locative alternation, the author aligns with the body of research that acknowledges a holistic affectedness of the object in the applicative variant with *with/of* across all four types of locative constructions.

Chapter 3 constitutes the central and most significant part of the work, as it presents the analysis of locative alternation from various perspectives. This extensive chapter is organized into four sections, each of which provides different examples of the analysis of locative alternation carried out within four distinct non-derivational models. These models adopt a communicative and cognitive orientation and are equipped

with descriptive and analytical tools that enable them to accurately describe and explain the range of locative constructions in which certain verbal predicates may participate.

The chapter begins with a summary of the fundamental principles of RRG, a structural-functional linguistic theory that aims to provide an integrative account of meaning, grammar, and language function from a typological perspective. This theory is particularly notable for its considerable descriptive and explanatory power. More specifically, the author emphasizes those elements of the theory that are inherited by the subsequent models, such as the universal features of languages, the hierarchical structure of the clause, the projection of constituents and operators, the classification of predicates based on Vendler's (1967) *Aktionsarten*, the system of lexical representation inspired by Dowty (1979), the notion of macroroles and their associated hierarchy, the concept of the privileged syntactic argument, and the linking algorithm.

With regard to the analysis of the locative alternation from this perspective, the author adopts a non-derivational approach, positing that the locative alternation is an epiphenomenon of the semantic compatibility between a verb and two independently existing argument constructions, following Jackendoff (1990), Goldberg (1995, 2006), Rappaport & Levin (1998), among others. More specifically, the author examines three types of transitive locative alternations – those involving the verbs *load/spray*, *clear*, and *wipe* – which are analysed and represented analogously as constructions containing a causative accomplishment predicate. The primary difference between the two variants is attributed to the distinct assignment of macroroles to the arguments. A fourth type of alternation – associated with verbs such as *swarm* or *flash* – is represented, in its first variant, as a logical structure comprising a locative predicate with two arguments: a locative argument and a second argument corresponding to the representation of an activity or semelfactive predicate. In its second variant, an attributive stative predicate is incorporated, which conveys the holistic meaning characteristic of the construction and includes the same two arguments as in the other variant.

Secondly, the analysis of the locative alternation is presented within the framework of the LCM, which aims to account for constructional meaning by addressing the relationship between syntax and meaning construction from a cognitive perspective. Drawing on descriptive, explanatory, and analytical tools from various functional and cognitive models, this approach offers a detailed representational system for describing both lexical entries and grammatical constructions. These are classified into four levels of description: argument structure, implicational constructions, illocutionary interpretation, and discourse relations. This thorough and in-depth analysis is undoubtedly an effective resource for explaining the construction and interpretation of meaning, as well as for formalizing conceptual structure. More specifically, the model succeeds in motivating the integration of predicates involved in locative alternations into the constructional templates of the standard locative and the applicative variant.

After presenting the analysis provided by the models RRG and LCM, the book offers a description of the locative alternation within the computational environment of the lexical-conceptual knowledge base FunGramKB, as well as its corresponding syntactic and semantic parser prototype ARTEMIS (Mairal-Usón & Perifán-Pascual, 2009, among others). These are introduced as examples of computational implementations in the field of natural language processing and understanding, which aim to automatically generate the semantic representation of natural language fragments in the form of conceptual logical structures. The definition of construction adopted in FunGramKB aligns closely with the conception of construction proposed in the LCM, where constructions are analysed from a holistic perspective. In this view, the meaning of a construction is always greater than the sum of the meanings of its constituent elements, and constructions are also categorized into distinct levels.

Given the central focus of the book, the author provides a more detailed account of level-1 constructions, or argumental constructions, which are stored in the knowledge base's Grammaticon, as these are the types of constructions associated with locative structures. One of the author's key contributions in this section is the proposal of a new criterion for explaining the syntactic and semantic phenomena that justify the inclusion of level-1 constructions in the FunGramKB inventory. In addition to existing criteria – namely, constructions involving argument addition or subtraction, or a change in *Aktionsart* – the author argues for the inclusion of constructions involving movement or exchange between arguments that do not affect verbal transitivity or aspect. These cases, the author contends, can only be explained as instances of marked macrorole assignment.

In the final section of Chapter 3, a formalized analysis is presented following the principles of the FL_CxG. Prior to this, and most appropriately, the author chooses to provide a preliminary overview of Sign-Based Construction Grammar (SBCG) (Sag, Boas, and Kay, 2012), as it served as a key source of inspiration in the development of this new model. The FL_CxG model emerges as a framework that aims to enrich the field of natural language processing by proposing a constructional grammar grounded in unification-based processes, situated within a functional and cognitive-constructional paradigm.

In the extensive description of this model provided by the author, the various theoretical influences it draws upon are clearly delineated. For instance, FL_CxG adopts from RRG the logical structures, the classification of verb classes (*Aktionsart*), the application of the notion of macrorole assignment, and the layered structure of both the phrase and the clause. Notably, in the case of clause structure, it introduces an intermediate level between the core and the clause nodes, namely the construction level. The model also incorporates the operators of RRG, albeit represented as a subset of attributes within the system of typed feature structures, and includes adjuncts, which are interpreted as subconstituents of the levels they modify. Furthermore, FL_CxG shares with SBCG the use of representations based on the formalism of typed feature structures. It also inherits from the LCM the cognitive mechanisms of subsumption and inference, which account for the interaction between lexical and constructional configurations, as well as the organization of

constructional units into four hierarchical levels. The model adopts the view of the lexicon as a computational system and incorporates three levels of representation from the GL theory, which become integral to the syntactic and semantic description of linguistic entities and grammatical objects: argument structure, event structure, and qualia structure. Finally, FL_CxG is also informed by the principles of the Natural Semantic Metalanguage (NSM) developed in the framework of generative semantics (Wierzbicka, 1996; Goddard & Wierzbicka, 1994, 2002), adopting universal semantic primitives and molecules along with their associated metalanguage. These contribute to the model's goal of achieving maximal translatability and even typological standardization.

After presenting the model, the author offers a highly detailed analysis of the locative alternation within the framework of FL_CxG. This analysis accounts for all the lexical-semantic and syntactic features involved in the unification of a single lexeme, such as *spread*, with two distinct constructions: the locative construction and the applicative construction with *with*. The author employs Attribute-Value Matrices (AVMs) to represent the lexeme *spread*, the combinatorial transitive locative construction, and the non-combinatorial transitive applicative construction with *with*. The section concludes with an explanation of the unification process involving the level-1 combinatorial locative construction and a sentence exemplifying the locative alternation with the verb *spread*.

In conclusion, *Introducción a la alternancia locativa en inglés: Análisis y propuesta de formalización* by Carolina Rodríguez-Juárez constitutes a valuable and significant contribution to the study of the phenomenon of locative alternation in the English language. The work provides a thorough analysis of this grammatical phenomenon from approaches framed within the perspectives of communication and cognition, with a lexicalist and constructionist orientation. Within this framework, particular attention is given to two models developed in Spain, namely LCM and FL-CxG, which are characterized by conceiving linguistic analysis as an interaction among syntax, semantics, and pragmatics through an examination of lexical-semantic properties. The detailed analysis and precise representation of locative alternation through the FL-CxG proposal not only accurately describe the predicates and the constructions they integrate via unification mechanisms, but also offer an explanatory framework that contributes to the analysis of language processing. Thus, it meets the descriptive and explanatory adequacy that characterizes grammatical models situated within the communication and cognition perspective.

The principal contribution of this volume lies not only in its exhaustive analysis of the locative alternation in the English language from various – albeit interrelated – perspectives, but also in its paving the way for similar studies that provide an equally clear and comprehensive understanding of other distinct grammatical constructions. More specifically, the author offers, with a style that is both clear and concise yet thorough and precise, an outstanding description of the different models that have examined the phenomenon of locative alternation, highlighting their similarities as well as their differences. In doing so, she succeeds not only in elucidating the analytical capacities of each model but also in emphasizing the significant value of Levin's (1993) work – along with the necessity to replicate such studies in other languages – and the substantial influence that RRG theory holds in contemporary linguistics due to its immense theoretical, comparative, and typological potential, as well as its applications in other fields such as computational linguistics. Lastly, this work also underscores the current need in linguistics for analyses that address the description and development of syntax in connection with the lexicon and constructions, as exemplified by the LCM and its formalized version, the FL_CxG. Such analyses are crucial both for the in-depth study of linguistic phenomena and for their implementation in natural language processing, a matter of paramount importance for the future of linguistics.

Finally, although I would not regard them as shortcomings per se, I would have appreciated the inclusion of more examples illustrating other types of locative constructions within the FL_CxG framework. Additionally, the inclusion of a glossary defining the numerous concepts and specialized terminology employed throughout the book might have been particularly helpful in enhancing the accessibility of the text.

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