The development of non-deontic *be bound to* in a radically usage-based diachronic construction grammar perspective

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Abstract

Even when both use and cognition are incorporated in its theorizing about grammatical change, research in diachronic construction grammar which explicitly subscribes to a "usage-based" approach does not always distinguish between abstraction from the observed usage of a linguistic community and individual linguistic knowledge. Given that language change starts with innovations by individuals, such a distinction crucially needs to be made to arrive at a realistic usage-based account of grammatical change. This paper first assesses the extent to which the conflicting models of Elizabeth Traugott and Olga Fischer succeed in teasing apart internal and external systems, concluding that while the former's reanalysis model results from an external semasiological perspective, the latter's analogy model is more radically usage-based in that it does not inherently entangle intra- and extra-individual knowledge. By way of illustration of a fundamentally analogy-based approach, the main part of the paper proposes an onomasiological account of how the pattern *be bound to* came to be used as a non-deontic/epistemic necessity marker, offering an alternative to viewing it as a development from the historically prior deontic *be bound to* construction. The data are mainly drawn from the *Oxford English Dictionary* and the Corpus of Late Modern English Texts.
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1. Introduction

This paper describes the development of *be bound to* as a non-deontic/epistemic necessity construction, with the intention to offer an illustration of what I call a "radically" usage-based account of constructionalization. To clarify what such an account entails I will start with juxtaposing two models of grammatical change, one that is fundamentally reanalysis-based and one that rejects reanalysis in favour of analogy, by bringing them together within the emerging framework of "diachronic construction grammar" (Barðdal et al., 2015) and comparing them in terms of how consistently they conform to a usage-based conception of language and language change. While one could justifiably talk of a reanalysis tradition and an analogy tradition in historical linguistics, the comparison will focus only on work by two scholars who can be considered to be leading exponents in that, arguably, they have been most vocal in their advocacy of the opposing models, viz. Elizabeth Traugott and Olga Fischer. They have both also unequivocally aligned themselves with a

usage-based model of linguistic knowledge. I will contend, however, that Fischer's analogy-based proposal about how new grammatical constructions come into being is more radical in its usage-based approach in that it does not involve a constructicon that is external to the speaker, while Traugott's reanalysis-based model hinges on a disparity between the speaker's internal constructicon and an external one which from a radically usage-based perspective has a more abstract ontological status.

A radically usage-based constructionist approach to grammatical change is unavoidably onomasiological in that it forces one to take into account similar form-meaning pairings with which novel constructions are likely to be connected in the innovators' internal constructional networks. It consequently invites explanations for the constructionalization of form-meaning pairings that are different from the inevitably fundamentally semasiological ones which result from the less consistently usage-based approach. I will illustrate this with a radically usage-based account of the history of *be bound to*, specifically of how it came to be used as a non-deontic/epistemic necessity construction. This construction is often mentioned in grammar books and studies on modality in English, usually together with a deontic *be bound to* construction, but the story of their origin and development has to date remained untold. The non-deontic construction is now the more frequent one, though it came about much more recently than the deontic construction. The question is why it should have come about. If it was a reanalysis of the older construction, it needs to be explained why this happened to *be bound to* but not to quite a few other deontically-used BE-V*en-to* patterns which, together with *be bound to*, could also be argued to be instantiations of a schematic deontic [BE V*en to* INF] construction.[1] Another question is whether an observable drop in the frequency of deontic *be bound to* after the non-deontic construction had come into being needs a reanalysis scenario for its explanation. Did the deontic construction become less frequent because it had been turned into something else? I will start exploring these questions by looking at the treatment of *be bound to* and similar constructions in the *Oxford English Dictionary*, which will lead me to two late-19th-century dialect dictionaries, and will subsequently discuss diachronic frequency data collected from the Corpus of Late Modern English Texts (CLMET, Version 3), tracing the development of *be bound to*, most relevantly, from the 18th to the 20th century and connecting it with several constructions which express epistemic certainty and non-deontic necessity.

The paper is structured as follows. In the next section I will contrast Traugott's and Fischer's proposals on how grammatical change is brought about by comparing them as usage-based constructionist models. This comparison will conclude with a sketch of some of the properties of a radically usage-based constructionist account of grammatical innovation. The ensuing sections deal with *be bound to*. Section 3 surveys its mention in grammar books and studies on English modality before turning to the lexicographical and diachronic corpus data on deontic and non-deontic *be bound to*. Section 4 then offers a radically usage-based constructionist account of the latter's development by making connections with other constructions. Section 5 summarizes this development and concludes.

2. Two usage-based models of grammatical change

2.1. Traugott and Fischer as usage-based diachronic construction grammarians

Diachronic construction grammar has been parsimoniously defined as "the historical study of constructions" (Barðdal and Gildea, 2015:42) and, somewhat more generously, as a field of work in linguistics that addresses linguistic change from the perspective of construction grammar (slightly adapted from Traugott and Trousdale, 2013:39). In other words, it can be taken to be a field of linguistics which looks at how constructions come into being as form-meaning pairings and how these form-meaning pairings might subsequently change, or more broadly at the evolution of the constructional resources of a language, i.e. of "constructicons".[2]

An important strand of work within diachronic construction grammar comprises research that can be grouped under the heading of "constructionist grammaticalization theory", which can be distinguished from "historical construction grammar" (Noël, 2013, 2016). While the latter builds on synchronic descriptive work in construction grammar (see, for instance, Barðdal, 2011; Colleman and De Clerck, 2011; David, 2015; Hilpert, 2013, 2015; Peng, 2013; Trousdale, 2013; Van de Velde, 2014), the grammaticalization strand encompasses work in grammaticalization theory subsequent to the constructionist turn it witnessed around the start of the century (see, for instance, Bisang, 1998; Bybee, 2003; De Smet, 2009, 2012; Fischer, 2007, 2008, 2010, 2013; Fried, 2009, 2013; Jing-Schmidt and Peng, 2016; Norde and Trousdale,

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[1] Here, and in what follows, I will use "pattern" to refer to lexically specific morphosyntactic configurations when I do not wish to pronounce on their constructional status. Notwithstanding their possible membership of more schematic constructions I will consistently refer to the *be bound to* "constructions", however, taking the attention they have received in the grammatical and linguistic literature (see Section 3.1) as evidence for their constructional status in the language.

[2] The term "constructicon" was coined by Daniel Jurafsky in his UC Berkeley PhD dissertation (Jurafsky, 1991); also see Jurafsky (1992:302).