Downlifting. Distinguishing vertical and horizontal links in a network of antonymous morphological constructions

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The focus of Construction Grammar and Morphology has recently shifted from constructions as nodes to the constructional network, in particular to the distinction between vertical and horizontal links (Audring 2019; Hilpert 2019; Diessel 2023). It has been argued that vertical and horizontal links express the same cognitive mechanism of similarity matching (Ungerer forthcoming) and are therefore difficult to distinguish empirically (Hoffmann 2020). However, since Construction Morphology deals with less schematic constructions than the syntactic patterns that were the traditional focus of Construction Grammar, morphological constructions with specified parts give rise to different kinds of similarity relations between constructions, such as antonymy. Presenting a case study of complex words with the locative prefixoids *up* and *down* (*upstairs, downfall*), this paper investigates how to model antonymy in a network of morphological constructions and proposes a morphology-specific distinction between vertical and horizontal links.

All tokens of the [up-x] and [down-x] constructions were extracted from the BNC (2001). Collostructional analysis (Stefanowitsch & Gries 2003) was employed to identify selectional restrictions and subschemas of the two constructions. The properties of the antonymous constructions were compared using productivity measures and other frequency information. After general properties and constraints of the constructions were identified, the Timestamped JSI Web Corpus 2014-2021 English (Bušta et al. 2017), a large web-based corpus, was examined for creative extensions of these schemas such as the following:

(1) *Or a family of river otters swim out of one creek, frolic **up-beach** in the surf, and then waddle up the dunes again and into the next creek, as if on a schedule?* (JSI Web, https://www.counterpunch.org/2021/03/24/point-reyes-national-something-or-other/)

(2) *22-year-old Jessica Zraly sang Adele's eloquent if rather **downlifting** Water Under The Bridge accompanied by pianist and VMO composer in residence Trevor Hoffmann.* (JSI Web, https://vancouversun.com/health/local-health/town-talk-fashion-boost-for-pacific-autism-family-network)

One of the subschemas of the constructions typically unifies with topographical nouns encoding elevation (*upstairs, downstairs*), moving bodies of water (*upriver, downriver*), or bounded areas identifiable on maps (*upstate, downstate*). *Beach* (1), not part of the categories identified before, is a marginal but unambiguous member of this pattern, pointing towards vertical links and a higher-order schema (upward strengthening hypothesis, Hilpert 2015). In contrast, in the case of prefix verbs (*uplifting, downfall*), coinages like *downlifting* (2) are taken as evidence for a strong analogical relationship between the antonymous constructions. Here, mutual productivity (Audring 2019: 289; Booij 2010: 33) supersedes the constraint against inherently directed verbs contradicting the direction expressed by the prefixoid. This analogical relationship can be profitably accounted for through Leino

and Östmann's (2005) notion of "metaconstruction", a generalization over a set of constructions that motivates spontaneous new coinages through analogy.

In sum, if the theoretical distinction between vertical and horizontal links is to be upheld in Construction Morphology, this paper argues that different places in the constructicon and different types of similarity require different types of links: (Sub)schemas with upward strengthening potential are best described through vertical links to a higher-order schema, whereas evidence for mutual productivity through analogy between distinct same-base relations can be accounted for through horizontal links or metaconstructions.

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