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Concession. A typological study

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1 Introduction

This study concerns the formal expression of concessive clauses across the languages of the world. Both in the literature and in descriptive grammars this phenomenon has not received by far the attention that has been given to, for instance, conditional or causal clauses. Although concessive clauses may be distinguished on formal grounds in many languages, they often share a series of syntactic properties with other types of adverbial clauses. In these cases they can only be distinguished *semantically* from, for instance, conditional, causal or temporal clauses.

The main focus of this study will be on the systematic correlation between the semantic subtypes of concessive clauses of the general format given in (1) on the one hand, and the way in which they are expressed on the other.\(^1\)

(1) Although \(p, q\)

The theoretical starting point of this study is the framework of Functional Grammar, especially the part within this theory which concerns the hierarchical or layered structure of discourse (Dik 1989, 1997; Hengeveld 1989, 1990, 1992, 1997a, 1997b; Crevels 1994, 1998). This theory provides the basis for the semantic subclassification of concessive clauses that forms the basis of the present investigation.

Apart from this brief introduction and the conclusion in Chapter 10, this book is divided in two parts: Part I *Theory* and Part II *Typology*. The division of the chapters is as follows: Chapters 2–4 contain a theoretical approach to concessive clauses. In Chapter 2 I will give a brief outline of the aspects of Functional Grammar which are relevant for this study, whereby I will especially focus on the layered structure of discourse. Chapters 3 and 4 contain descriptions of the semantic and formal properties of concessive clauses, respectively.

Chapters 5–9 are devoted to the outcome of the typological survey and the subsequent testing of a number of hypotheses. In Chapter 5 a short overview is given of the hypotheses which are to be tested on the basis of the data drawn from the language sample. Furthermore, I will discuss the methodology which I have used to obtain the language data. It goes without saying that a typological survey of concessive clauses is greatly thwarted by the lack of relevant data. Chapter 6 contains a discussion of the coordination–subordination continuum. Chapter 7 fo-

\(^1\) This position implies that the full range of concessive linkers that languages may have, will not be taken into account. For a more detailed discussion of concessive constructions in German, Italian, and French—see e.g. Herczeg (1976), Baschewa (1980), Darcueil (1980), Mazzoleni (1981), Métrich (1983), Moretti (1983), Valentin (1983), Pasch (1992a, 1992b, 1994), and Di Meola (1997a, 1997b, 1998).
cuses on syndetic versus asyndetic linking and Chapter 8 gives an overview of the distinct verbal forms which are used in concessive clauses. Chapter 9 is devoted to the lexical contiguity of concessive linkers.

In Chapter 10, finally, the linguistic implications of the previous chapters are combined into a conclusion.

Throughout the text of this book interlinear glosses are given for languages other than English. Depending on the availability of specialized linguists or bibliographical sources on the languages in question (cf. also Section 5.2), these glosses may vary from word-to-word glosses to full morpheme-by-morpheme glosses. The conventions used in the glosses are largely based on Lehmann (1982).
PART ONE
Theory