Contents

Abbreviations xi
Acknowledgements xiii

1 Introduction 1

Part I Theoretical Background 7

2 Categorization in Linguistics 9
2.1 Introduction 9
2.2 The classical philosophical tradition of categorization 11
2.3 The linguistic tradition: early grammarians 14
2.4 Twentieth-century approaches to linguistic categorization 17
2.4.1 Bloomfield and American structuralism 17
2.4.2 Transformational grammar 18
2.4.3 Generative Semantics 23
2.4.4 Descriptive grammar 25
2.4.5 Cognitive approaches 26
2.4.6 Functional-typological and discourse typological linguistics 30
2.4.7 Other frameworks: Phrase Structure Grammar and Construction Grammar 32

3 Grammatical Gradience 34
3.1 Introduction 34
3.2 Notions of gradience in ancient and modern philosophy 35
3.3 The linguistic tradition: early grammarians 38
3.4 Twentieth-century approaches to gradience 39
3.4.1 The post-Bloomfieldians and Bolinger 39
3.4.2 Firth and Halliday 42
3.4.3 Transformational Grammar 43
3.4.4 Generative Semantics 52
3.4.5 Logical approaches to linguistic vagueness: the Prague school, Zadeh, and Ross 58
3.4.6 Descriptive grammar 62
3.4.7 Cognitive approaches 68

3.4.8 Functional-typological and discourse-typological linguistics 71
3.4.9 Optimality Theory 72
3.4.10 Probability Theory 73
3.4.11 Other frameworks: Phrase Structure Grammar, Word Grammar, Lexical-Functional Grammar, and Construction Grammar 75
3.5 Two types of gradience 79
4 Gradience and Related Notions 80
4.1 Introduction 80
4.2 Serial relationship 80
4.3 Syntactic mixing: mergers 83
4.4 Multiple analysis and reanalysis 86
4.5 Gradience and Prototype Theory 87
4.6 Gradience and Markedness Theory 90

Part II Gradience in English: Case Studies 95

5 Subsective Gradience 97
5.1 SG within word classes 97
5.1.1 Verbs 98
5.1.2 Nouns 101
5.1.3 Adjectives 105
5.1.4 Prepositions 107
5.2 SG within phrases 111
5.3 SG within clauses 117
5.4 SG in grammar 121
6 Intersective Gradience 124
6.1 IG between word classes 124
6.1.1 Gradience between pre-head elements within noun phrases 124
6.1.1.1 Determinatives and pronouns 125
6.1.1.2 Determinatives and adjectives 125
6.1.1.3 Determinatives and adverbs 127
6.1.1.4 Adjectives and nouns 129
6.1.1.5 Adjectives and adverbs 136
6.1.2 Gradience between verbs and other word classes 138
6.1.2.1 Verbs and adjectives 138
6.1.2.2 Verbs and nouns 143

6.1.2.3 Verbs and prepositions/conjunctions 145
6.1.2.4 Verbs and adverbs 149
6.1.3 Further cases 150
6.1.3.1 Adverbs, prepositions, and conjunctions 150
6.1.3.2 Adverbs and nouns 155
6.1.3.3 Adjectives and prepositions 156
6.2 IG between phrases 158
6.2.1 Adjective phrases and noun phrases 158
6.2.2 Adjective phrases and prepositional phrases 160
6.2.3 Noun phrases and prepositional phrases 161
6.3 IG in grammar 162
7 Constructional Gradience 164
7.1 Introduction 164
7.2 A brief history of the notion 'construction' 164
7.2.1 Structuralism and Transformational Grammar 164
7.2.2 Descriptive grammar 166
7.2.3 Cognitive Linguistics 167
7.2.4 Constructionist frameworks 168
7.3 The notion 'construction' 170
7.4 Constructional Gradience 171
7.4.1 Subsective Constructional Gradience (SCG) 171
7.4.1.1 Pseudoclefts 172
7.4.1.2 Constructions involving subject–auxiliary inversion (SAI) 173
7.4.1.3 Verb + NP and Verb + NP + NP constructions 173
7.4.1.4 Transitive constructions 174
7.4.1.5 The possessive construction 175
7.4.1.6 Complex prepositions 176
7.4.1.7 The passive gradient 178
7.4.2 Intersective Constructional Gradience (ICG) 180
7.4.2.1 Genitival constructions 180
7.4.2.2 Taylor's possessive constructions gradient 181
7.4.2.3 Coordination and subordination 182
7.4.2.4 Verb complementation: monotransitive, ditransitive, and complex transitive constructions 185
7.4.2.5 Complements and adjuncts 186
7.4.2.6 Syntactic blends and fusions 187

7.5 Constructional Gradience in grammar 192
7.5.1 Vague meaning 193
7.5.2 'Too much' meaning 194
7.5.3 'Too little' meaning 195
7.6 A purely syntactic approach to constructions 196

Part III Formalization 199

8 Modelling Syntactic Gradience 201
8.1 Introduction 201
8.2 Vagueness, representations, and gradience 202
8.2.1 Eliminating vagueness by looking more closely: apparent sameness 203
8.2.2 Eliminating vagueness by looking more closely: apparent differences 203
8.2.3 Determinatives: a further case of apparent sameness? 204
8.3 A formalization of Subsective Gradience and Intersective Gradience 205
8.3.1 Subsective Gradience 205
8.3.2 Intersective Gradience 207
8.4 Some applications 208
8.4.1 SG in the adjective class 209
8.4.2 IG between verbs and nouns: the English gerund 210
8.4.3 IG between verbs and adjectives 214
8.4.4 IG between adjectives and prepositions: *near* and *like* 215
8.4.5 Complementizers and prepositions 219
8.4.6 Constructions: V + NP + [*to*-infinitive] vs. V + [NP + *to*-infinitive] 222
8.5 The present account vs. the Aristotelian and 'Sorites' models 223
8.6 The syntactic properties of the categories 225
8.6.1 How can we be sure to identify all the relevant properties, and are all the properties equally important? 225
8.6.2 How can we know that a particular property is an independent one and not merely a variant of an already identified property? 227
8.6.3 Is it indeed the case that the syntactic properties that characterize a particular form class are unique to that class? 227

8.6.4 Is it true that an element belonging to a particular class can converge on at most one other word class in any one syntactic configuration? 228
8.7 'True hybridity' 228
8.8 The nature of grammatical categories 234
8.9 The contiguity of grammatical categories 235
8.10 Conclusion 241

References 243
Index 265