



## Research Networking Programmes

Short Visit Grant  or Exchange Visit Grant

*(please tick the relevant box)*

### Scientific Report

**Scientific report (one single document in WORD or PDF file) should be submitted online within one month of the event. It should not exceed eight A4 pages.**

**Proposal Title:** Motion as a Fundamental Construct of Mind and Language

**Application Reference N°:** 5664

#### 1) Purpose of the visit

After Soonja Choi visited Dublin in June to identify concrete ways to bring to fruition the convergence of interests shown by researchers in Dublin and Vienna on motion in the mental lexicon, Paolo Acquaviva's visit to Vienna served to (i) finalize a decision on which avenues would be pursued among those identified in June, (ii) agree on operational details, and (iii) pursue the search for concrete opportunities of collaborations. As regards each point in turn:

(i) In June, a number of grants were identified as possible ways to develop funded projects: an ELEVATE postdoctoral fellowship (co-funded by the Marie Curie programme and by the Irish Research Council); one in a few smaller-scale Marie Curie actions (an Intra-European Fellowship, and International Incoming Fellowship, and an International Research Staff Exchange Scheme); and a COST action. In addition, postgraduate (doctoral) scholarships of the Irish Research Council were later identified as a way to enable doctoral students from another EU country to carry out doctoral research projects in Dublin under the supervision of a linguist and a computational scientist. Beside these funding applications, the June meeting suggested a journal article with open peer commentary, or a collection of papers (in a book or in a journal monographic issue) as apt outlets for interdisciplinary publications. A number of research topics were identified as potential subjects for collaborative research (the infra-lexical component' of PATH and MANNER and their grammaticalization, in acquisition and in diachrony).

The face-to-face discussions in Vienna served to reach a decision on which avenue would be viable.

(ii) For the planned grant applications, it was important to gather practical information about ways to maximise the chances of success. This could be best achieved by direct talks with the members of the Comparative Psycholinguistics group in Vienna, who have considerable experience in this field. In a parallel manner, initiatives that did not lead to grant applications also needed to be made precise in concrete operational terms: in particular, an invitation to Bozena Dubiel (Dublin) to participate in a workshop on acquisition in Vienna, in the Spring 2014, and the various possibilities that had emerged of joint work on single papers or edited collections.

(iii) While the discussions in Dublin evidenced a significant convergence of interests on a better characterization of the notions of PATH and MANNER as determinants of meaning in motion verbs, and a shared confidence in the usefulness of joining theoretical analysis to experimental and quantitative methodologies, no specific working plan emerged. Face-to-face discussions in Vienna had the goal of ascertaining whether any of these areas of common interest could become the subject of a joint paper.

## **2) Description of the work carried out during the visit**

The work was concentrated in two full days, November 4 and 5 (with arrival and departure on November 3 and 6).

On Monday 4, Paolo Acquaviva had a meeting with Soonja Choi and Wolfgang Ulrich Dressler (9.30-12.30), followed by conversations with Wolfgang Ulrich Dressler (2.00-3.00), with Wolfgang Dressler and Katarina Korecky-Kroll (3.00-3.30), and with Soonja Choi (3.30-4.30). The first of these sessions covered the main points on the agenda: Paolo Acquaviva reported on the progress made since June on grants and other initiatives, and it was agreed that the most concrete and immediate initiative was an ELEVATE postdoctoral grant application by Valeria Bandecchi (PhD student of Paolo Acquaviva in Dublin). This three-year project involves a stay of two years in Vienna with Soonja Choi as external mentor, while Mark Keane in Dublin agreed to act as internal mentor for the final year to spend in Dublin. Taken together, the competencies of the two mentors and of the PhD supervisor would make for a research plan with a strong interdisciplinary character. In addition, Acquaviva reported on the postgraduate scholarships funded by the Irish Research Council, described the work being conducted with computationalists in Dublin (on November 8 a meeting would take place with a prospective candidate), and invited potential candidates from Vienna to consider this opportunity for funding interdisciplinary doctoral research. It was noted that, at the moment, no other concrete possibility seems to exist for Marie Curie or COST applications. On a different front, Dressler confirmed the invitation to Bozena Dubiel to take part in a workshop in Vienna (Spring 2014); it was noted that lack of travel funds may prevent her from availing of this opportunity, but this could change. An in-depth discussion then took place concerning the scientific research questions which were previously identified as object of shared interest, principally the notions of MANNER and PATH of motion as constituent parts of verbs, across languages and in acquisition. Choi, in particular, referred to her past work on the conceptualization of a PATH component and suggested that the inclusion of a boundary in this component may mark a significant typological divide across languages. In turn, a linguistically informed analysis of acquisition data could reveal whether PATH- and MANNER-encoding expressions appear differently (with different frequencies) in the linguistic input which is the basis for language learning, and whether there is any asymmetry in this domain across languages or language types. Dressler further noted that German motion verbs of the type of

'uebersetzen' ('to cross over/ to bring across') interestingly differ from morphologically similar ones like 'ueberfliegen' ('to fly over') in their meaning and in their potential for metaphorical use, in ways that could be made clearer by a sharper investigation of MANNER and PATH. Finally, Acquaviva mentioned the work by Jamal Ouhalla (Dublin) on the diachronic development of motion predicates from manner-of-motion expressions (like 'walk') to expressions of spatial displacement ('to go'), to future morphemes, detached from space. The potential interest of this further dimension was noted.

The afternoon sessions focussed on more specific issues. With Dressler, Acquaviva discussed in some depth the topic of plurality in natural language, which both had investigated for some years. In particular, the discussion sought to find points of contact between theoretical-typological investigations and the results emerging from acquisition studies. This last aspect could benefit from the direct input from Katharina Korecky-Kroll, who has been working with Dressler on a project on the expression of plural in the input for language acquisition. The session with Choi was instead devoted to making precise the role of the external mentor for the ELEVATE application, and to further discuss the notion of MANNER with a view to turn a generic convergence of interests into a concrete research proposal. In this connection Choi identified a lesser-known phenomenon of Korean (manner/size adverbial modifiers keyed to the choice of the verb) as a suitable topic for joint investigation; this topic was pursued in the following day.

On Tuesday 5, the morning was taken up by a research paper presented by Acquaviva in the Institute of Linguistics ('Constructing Plural(s)', 10.30-12.00). The talk was hosted by Hans Luschuetsky, who kindly agreed to provide for this a whole teaching slot of one and a half hour. In the afternoon, Acquaviva met first Sabine Laaha (2.30-3.00), who provided a wealth of practical information about the application process for Marie Curie funding (this concerned the planned ELEVATE application, co-funded by the Marie Curie programme and by the Irish Research Council). Subsequently, Acquaviva and Choi pursued their discussions on Choi's role as external mentor for the ELEVATE application, on the next tasks in the application process, and on Korean manner expressions as a possible joint research topic.

### **3) Description of the main results obtained**

The first practical result was a substantial contribution towards the ELEVATE application. Wolfgang Ulrich Dressler and Soonja Choi provided much valuable information and suggestions in this connection; in particular, Dressler suggested the inclusion of a corpus-linguistic dimension, based on the resources available in Vienna (especially at the Institute of Corpus Linguistics and Text Technology in the Austrian Academy of Sciences), as well as suggesting a comparative-linguistic dimension to the project, which would suit the European dimension of the application and would sit well with the competencies and contacts available in Vienna; in particular, the inclusion of Slovak as a representative of Slavonic was advised. In addition, a practical suggestion was to consider reference to visual cognition and processing, possibly in connection with spatial components in metaphorical and analogical uses of motion predicates. This would have the advantage of bringing the topic of MANNER in the conceptualization of motion verbs closer to the interest of cognitive psychologists, who could then provide a

further dimension of interdisciplinary research and training both in Vienna and in Dublin (in the person of Mark Keane). Concerning the concrete organization of the work, Choi made it clear that the first priority is to spell out specific research questions, which would then lead to questions of experimental design. It was agreed therefore that Acquaviva and Valeria Bandecchi, in tandem with Mark Keane, would work on this aspect with the goal of sending Choi a detailed research plan by early or mid-December 2013.

Secondly, the visit brought back Bozena Dubiel into contact with Dressler, after several months in which communication had stopped. Contact has resumed with an exchange of emails the day following the visit (7 November), and it is now to be expected that the collaboration concerning acquisition will follow its course, bringing Dubiel to Vienna in 2014 and facilitating cooperation with the Vienna acquisition group. Lack of travel funding for Dubiel could still hamper efforts, as noted.

Thirdly, plural has emerged as a promising area where the theoretical research profile of Acquaviva and the extensive acquisition studies conducted under the supervision of Dressler can usefully interact. This topic had not been identified in the visit to Dublin in June, but the clear interest demonstrated by both parts in Vienna on integrating the two approaches is most encouraging. Dressler has already drafted a series of concrete, specific research questions (9 November) which are meant to lead to a joint publication.

Fourth, Acquaviva and Choi also individuated a new promising topic for joint research, namely the expression of manner modification in Korean verbal predicates. Unlike the previous item, this does not arise from years of in-depth research, but is rather a new development, which was made possible by the discussions on MANNER and motion in Dublin and in Vienna. Because the literature and the data have yet to be properly investigated, this development is necessarily more tentative in nature, but still represents a concrete research proposal, which Choi and Acquaviva will consider in the coming months.

**4) Future collaboration with host institution (if applicable)**

**5) Projected publications / articles resulting or to result from the grant (ESF must be acknowledged in publications resulting from the grantee's work in relation with the grant)**

Each of the four lines of development listed in the foregoing section can in principle result in published deliverables. No single publication has been decided on at this stage, since key aspects of future developments are still conditional on the success of Bandecchi's application (submission in January 2014) and on Dubiel's ability to pursue her collaboration with Dressler. Should these be successful, publications would be the most natural deliverables. On the other hand, a joint paper is being considered, which would subject the results of Dressler's investigations on the acquisition of plural to new questions stemming from Acquaviva's theoretical research. In addition, Acquaviva and Choi will explore the feasibility of a joint paper on Korean verbs and manner modifiers. The discussions in Vienna identified these two research questions and showed that they

are worth following up on; work is now necessary to ascertain if and how they can be turned into concrete research contributions leading to the envisaged published results.

**6) Other comments (if any)**