

Semi-auxiliaries in French from a frames and constructions diachronic perspective
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We observe seven French semi-auxiliaries *devoir, falloir, vouloir, pouvoir, aller, venir, faire* and propose an analysis using a Frames and Constructions approach. The data question the diachronic evolution of the semi-auxiliaries constructions as a category, their collocational patterns and their grammaticalization by analogy. This grammatical and lexical motivation is combined with a semantic dynamicity of *profiling* in terms of Frames (Goldberg 2010, Gosselin 2012).

The question of auxiliaryity has been discussed in French lately at the 17th century whereas, semi-auxiliaries appeared earlier in the written text as soon as the 12th century. They spread during the 14th-15th centuries and increased noticeably during the Renaissance period (16th-17th century) as proved in the data brought by the present study. Nevertheless, the limit between the notions of auxiliaryity, and semi-auxiliaryity is not easy to draw (Lamiroy 1999). Besides the commonly accepted auxiliaries *be* and *have* since early grammars (Grévisse and Goose 2011), other auxiliaries such as *devoir* ('must', 'may', 'have to'), *falloir* ('must', 'have to'), *vouloir* ('want'), *pouvoir* ('may', 'can'), *aller* ('go'), *venir* ('come'), *faire* ('make') expressing mood, aspect, temporality or causation are also frequently -even if less commonly- found in the texts during our five delimited diachronic periods, Old French, Middle French, Renaissance, Classical and Modern French. Those verbs, as retrieved in our data, are attested in a cline between a plain lexical meaning towards a more grammaticalized meaning (sometimes called « vector » verbs). The next question arises then about the delimitation of the number of semi-auxiliaries. Does the set include for example verbs like *commencer à* ('start with'), *cesser de* ('stop'), *partir* ('leave'), *continuer de* ('continue'), *tarder à* ('take time to') all denoting an aspectual phase, once combined with an infinitive? The frontier is therefore vague between Lexicon and Grammar (Gosselin 2012) and the phenomena is more efficiently described in diachrony as a *Verb-to-TAM Chain* [Verbe plein > AUX1 > ... AUXn > Affixe] (Hopper & Traugott 2003) expressing the evolution from Lexicon to Grammar, and as well Morphology. We present data extracted from the French database Frantext (Base textuelle FRANTEXT (INALF/ATILF-CNRS)). Our diachronic data are retrieved between the 12th century (*La Chanson de Roland*, Anonyme, 1100) and nowadays. Following Hilpert 2008, 2012 we use this corpus resource for a collostructional analysis, tracking the evolution of the collocational patterns of these semi-auxiliaries in French:

« Shifts (...) indicate developments in constructional meaning –as the construction changes semantically, it comes to be used with different collocates. Newly incoming collocates not only show that some change is underway; their lexical meanings further indicate how the construction changes semantically. » (Hilpert 2012 :234).

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