

Argument structure in the syntax-lexicon *continuum*

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This contribution aims at providing a corpus-driven analysis of the argument structure of some semantic classes of Italian verbs according to a constructionist and a usage-based approach. To this purpose, the semantic classes of verbs of *hitting* and *breaking*, and those of commercial transactions will be explored. Corpus data will allow us to single out the most frequent constructions of each verb. A comparison between these constructions and those listed in dictionaries will show that there is a remarkable mismatch between real data and what is generally recorded in the abstract lexical entries. For this reason, data from *Paisà corpus* will be extracted and the entries of Italian dictionaries will be checked out (e.g. *GRADIT*, *Treccani*, *CombiNet* dictionaries). The analysis has implications on both the theoretical and the applied points of view. As far as the theory is concerned, it will be demonstrated that i) there is a deep interdependence between lexis and grammar, and that ii) the argument structure is often affected by the pragmatic needs of the speaker; this proves that argument structure is not determined once and forever in an abstract way, but is built on the basis of the linguistic and situational context. From the applied viewpoint, this has relevant consequences on language teaching of verbal units, and more specifically on their representation in learner's dictionaries.