

Update for October 2023:

Extracts from the Sinclair Open Lecture, delivered  
11 September 2023.

Title: “From Pattern to System: an exploration in lexical grammar”

# The 'transitivity' project: attempting to build paths through the forest

- Stage 1: Using the information in the 1996 'grammar patterns' publication to derive verb-argument constructions.
- Stage 2: Using the sets of constructions to derive system networks related to specific meaning.
- Influences:
  - Sinclair, Francis, Halliday, Goldberg.
  - Hanks (PDEV); Hasan (lexis as delicate grammar); Fillmore, also Patten & Perek (FrameNet); Barnbrook, Su (local grammar).

# The 'transitivity' project: attempting to build paths through the forest

- Stage 1: Using the information in the 1996 'grammar patterns' publication to derive verb-argument constructions.
  - **50 patterns re-interpreted; c. 750 constructions identified**
- Stage 2: Using the sets of constructions to derive system networks related to specific meaning.
  - **System networks derived for Communication; Cognition; Carrier-Attribute; Logical Relations.**
  - **Coming soon: Causality; Change; Creation**
- Acknowledgements:
  - Leverhulme
  - Abbie Ip
  - Cerys Lewis and Mohammad Afraz Ahmed

# The argument

- It is possible to re-interpret the information from the corpus-based Pattern Grammar resources as Constructions.
- But, those constructions are best presented as a network, not as a list.
- It is possible to build the constructions into system networks, showing alternative meanings in the same semantic field.
- But each construction can exemplify more than one field, so entering into more than one network.
- **= The interpretations are complementary, not exclusive.**

# Following through an example

- **“Wundt described Principles of Psychology as beautiful literature, but not psychology.” (BAWE)**

# Wundt described Principles of Psychology as beautiful literature, but not psychology.

- The pattern
  - **V n *as* n**
  - DESCRIBE is one of 137 verbs attested with this pattern.
- The construction
  - The '*as*-predicative construction' (Gries et al 2005; Hiltunen 2010).
  - Complex transitive verb + *as* + predicative complement denoting a property.
  - The meaning is not derivable from the constituents.
- The functional systems
  - A verbal process, verging on a material process.
  - An example of an expansion of the dialogic space. (Martin and White 2005)

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# The construction

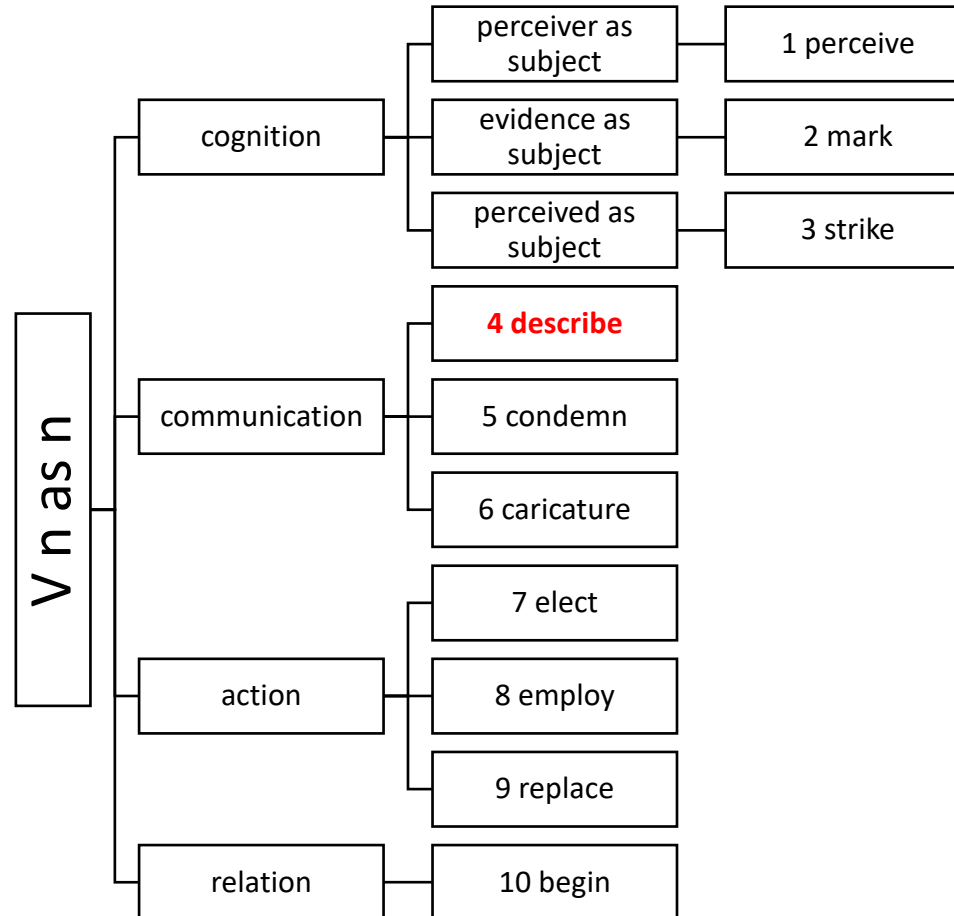
Pattern	V n as n	From pattern grammar
Construction number	4	
Construction name	the describe someone as construction	Uses one of the verbs
Description	A person says or writes that someone or something has a specific quality or role.	
Verbs	acclaim, acknowledge, address, announce, authenticate, bill, categorise, cite, classify, define, <b>describe</b> , diagnose, hail, identify, label, mention, pinpoint, portray, present, proclaim, project, rank, refer to, represent, tag, term, tout	From pattern grammar
Example	A spokesman ... described the device as a sophisticated pacemaker...	From the British National Corpus



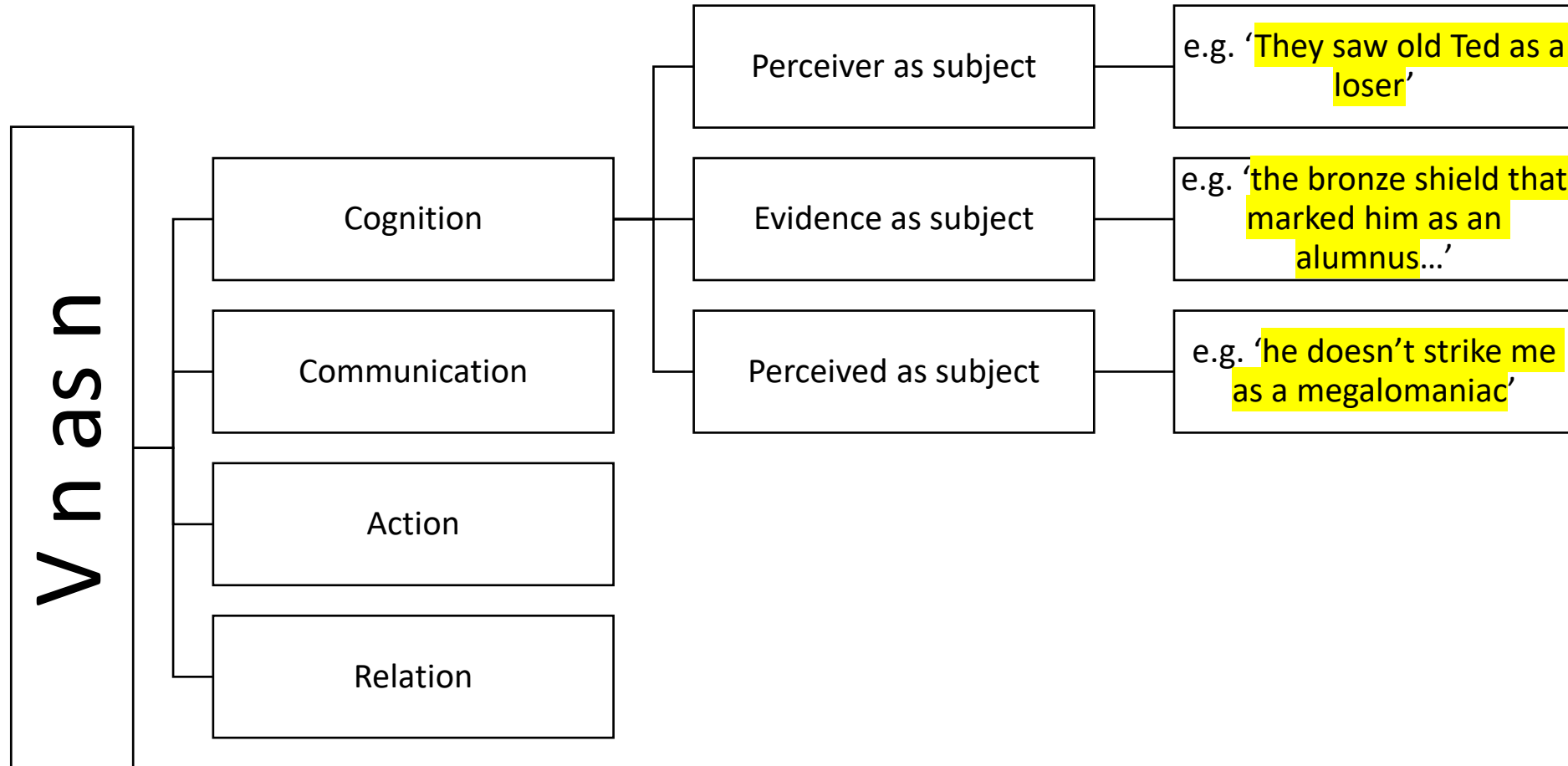
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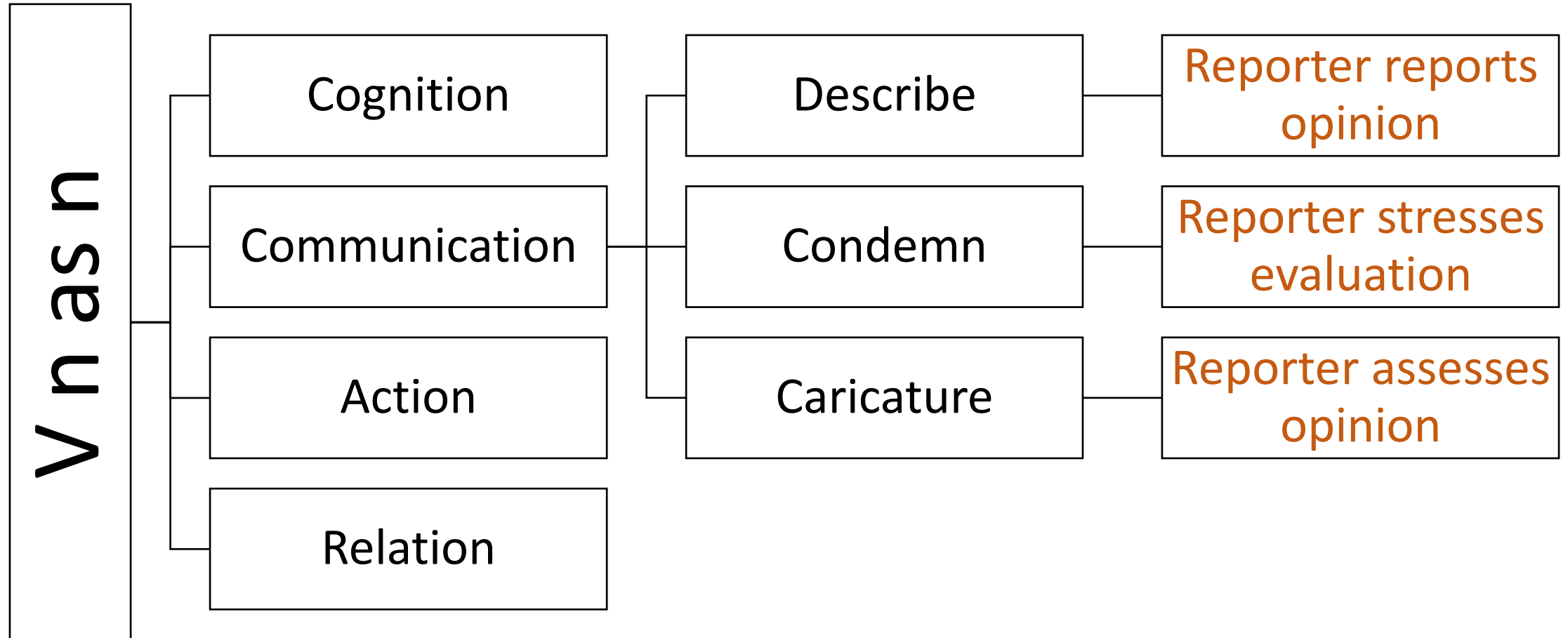
# A network of constructions



# Cognition – distinctions of form



# Communication – distinctions of meaning



# The Communications constructions

- The 'V n as n' Communicate construction
  - Person communicates entity as entity
- The 'V n as n' neutral-report construction
  - Person describes entity as property (**He described the book as literature**)
- The 'V n as n' evaluative-report construction
  - Person condemns/praises entity as property (**He praised it as literature**)
- The 'V n as n' reporter-evaluates construction
  - Person caricatures entity as property (**He caricatured the book as literature**)

# The example: adding fields

- **“Wundt described Principles of Psychology as beautiful literature, but not psychology.”**
- It makes a meaning of ‘communication’ (someone describes something in a particular way).
- It makes a meaning of ‘having an identity’ (the book is literature, according to Wundt).

# The example: adding roles

- **“Wundt described Principles of Psychology as beautiful literature, but not psychology.”**
- Each part of the example has a predictable function:
- Viewed as communication:
  - Wundt = Sayer
  - Principles... is beautiful literature = Message(-State)
- Viewed as identity:
  - Principles of Psychology = Carrier
  - literature, not psychology = Attribute

# The construction: adding fields and roles

Pattern	V n as n
Construction number	4
Construction name	the describe someone as construction
Description	A person says or writes that someone or something has a specific quality or role.
Verbs	acclaim, acknowledge, address, announce, authenticate, bill, categorise, cite, classify, define, <b>describe</b> , diagnose, hail identify, label, mention, pinpoint, portray, present, proclaim, project, rank, refer to, represent, tag, term, tout
Example	A spokesman ... described the device as a sophisticated pacemaker...
<b>Semantic field</b>	<b>Communication</b>
<b>Roles</b>	<b>NP1: Sayer; NP2+NP3: Message-State</b>
<b>Semantic field</b>	<b>Carrier-Attribute</b>
<b>Roles</b>	<b>NP1: Sayer; NP2: Carrier; NP3: Attribute</b>



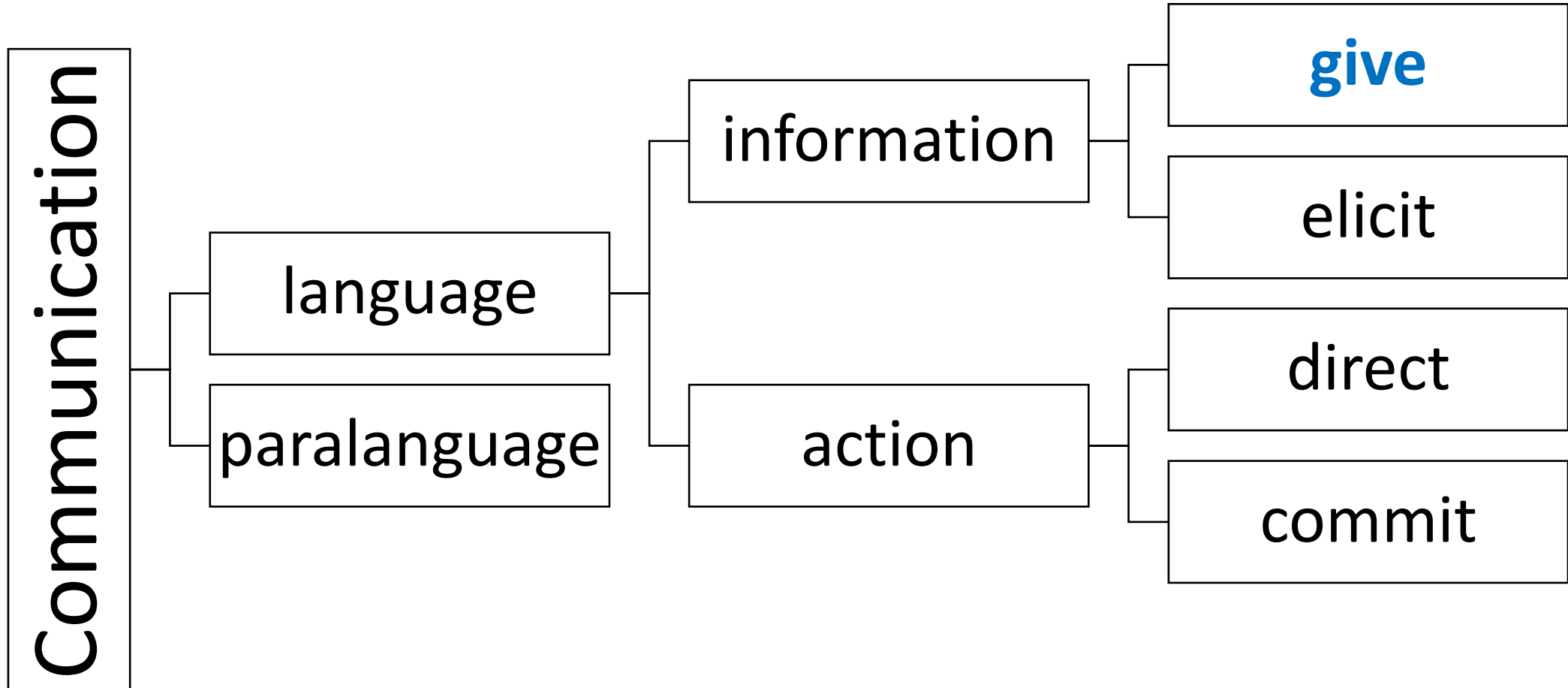
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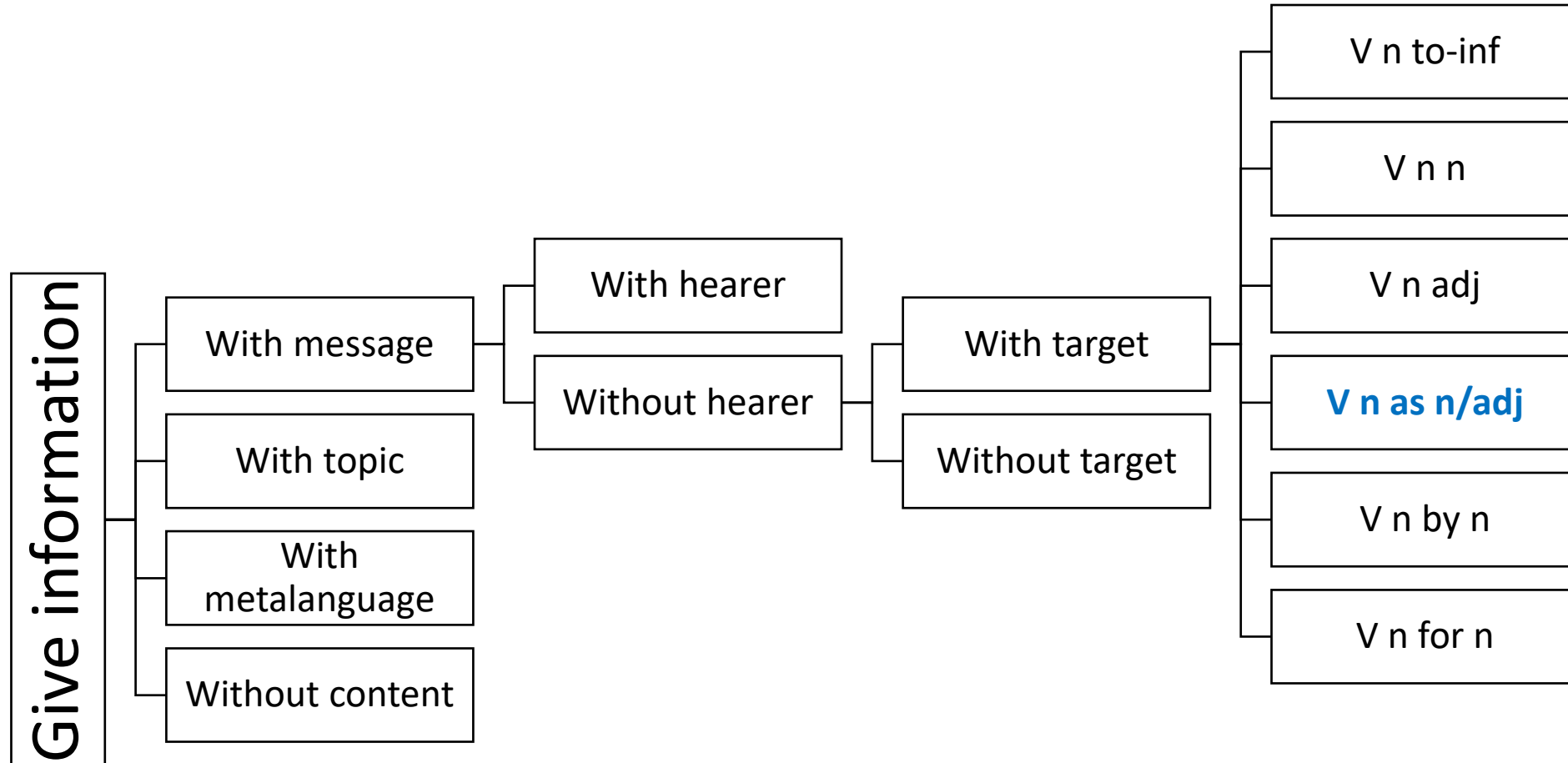
# Communication network

- Process: scrutinise every construction for instances of this semantic field.
- Number of patterns expressing the meaning of ‘someone communicates’:  
29
- Number of constructions expressing the meaning of ‘someone communicates’: 111
- The task: create a network showing the 111 constructions as the outcome of series of choices.

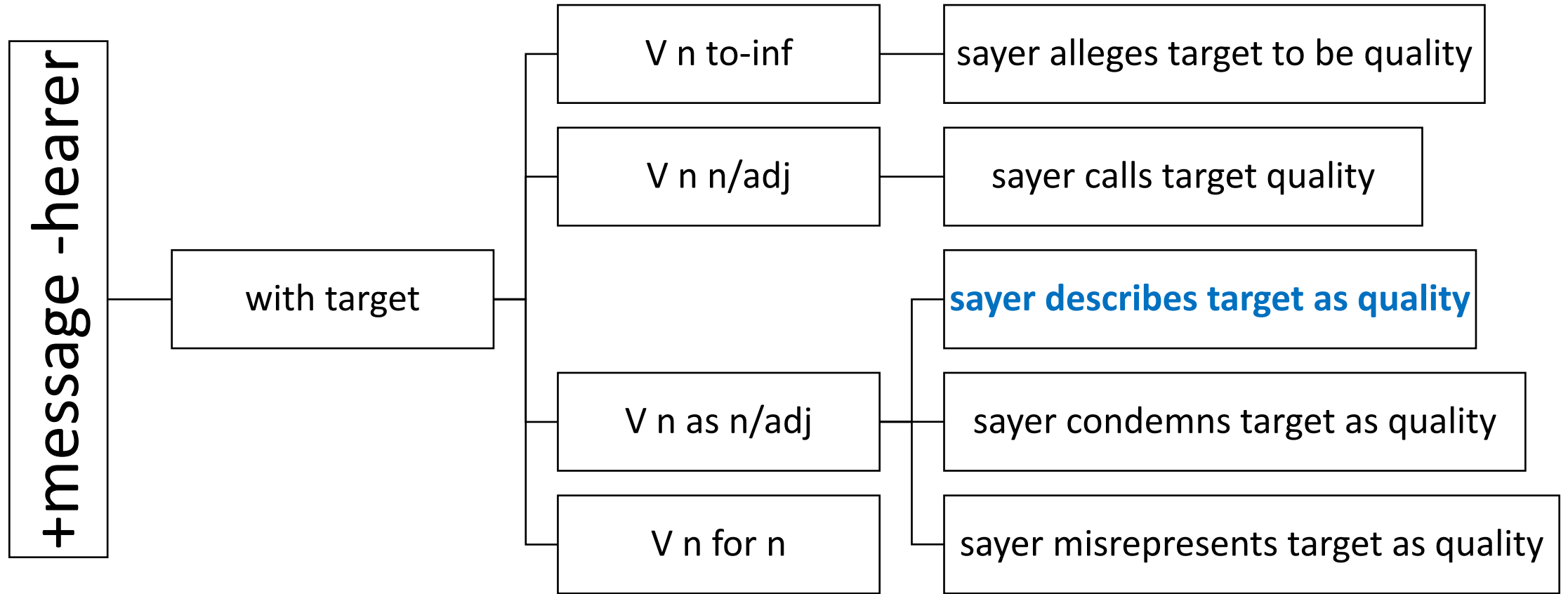
# The Communication Network 1



# The Communication Network 2



# The Communication Network 3



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# The Carrier-Attribute Network

- Basic meaning: something has a property, identity or quality.
- Additional meanings: something has a quality as a result of an action; something is said/thought to have a quality.
- 27 patterns express this meaning.
- 132 constructions express this meaning. (Usually alongside other meanings)

# Some examples: a is b

the sea looked green				
	the stars shone bright			
		he remains a bachelor		
			he came across as honest	
				they dressed like teenagers



# Some examples: **a** changes to **b**

the sea looked green				
	the stars shone bright			
the crowd divided into two mobs		he remains a bachelor		
	she progressed to head teacher		he came across as honest	
		the engine developed a fault		they dressed like teenagers

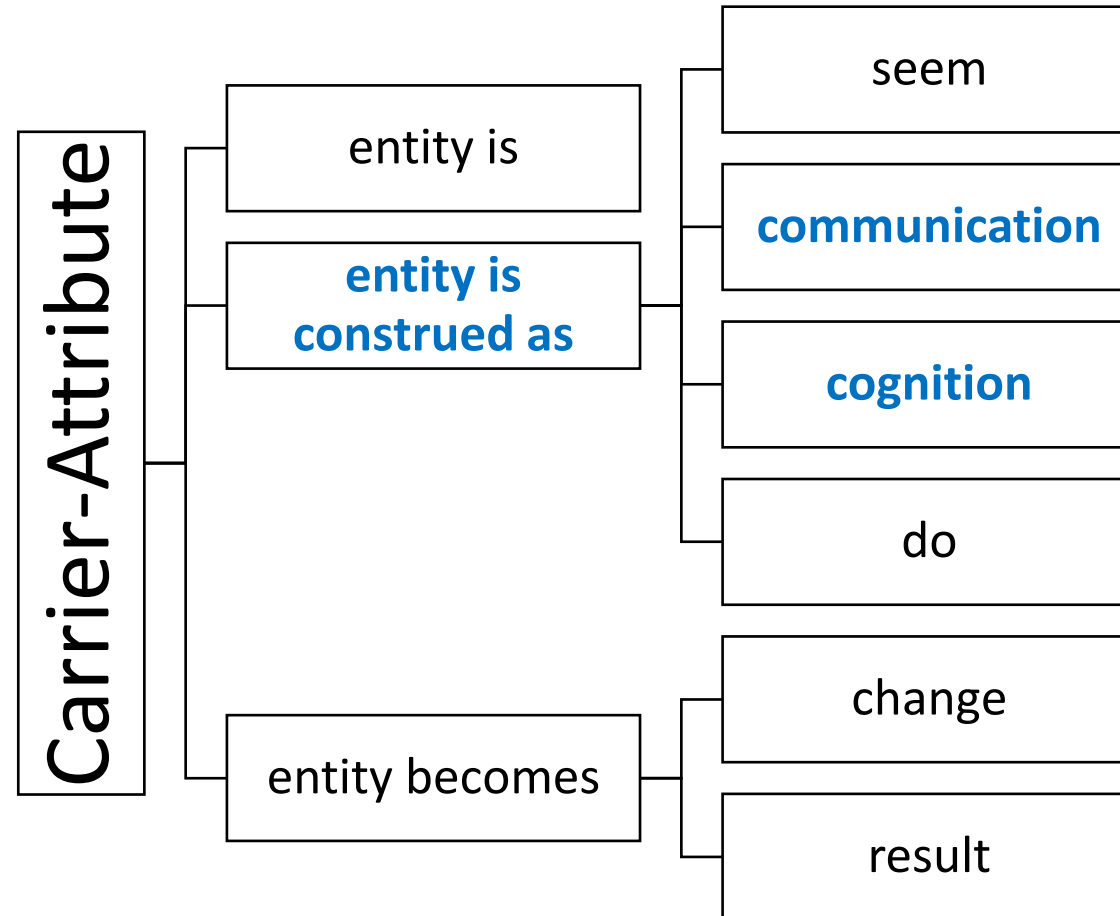
# Some examples: causing **a** to become **b**

the sea looked green	she translated the book into Latin			
	the stars shone bright	it flooded the area with light		
the crowd divided into two mobs		he remains a bachelor	he cut the bread into slices	
he wiped the slate clean	she progressed to head teacher		he came across as honest	he appointed her foreign secretary
		the engine developed a fault		they dressed like teenagers

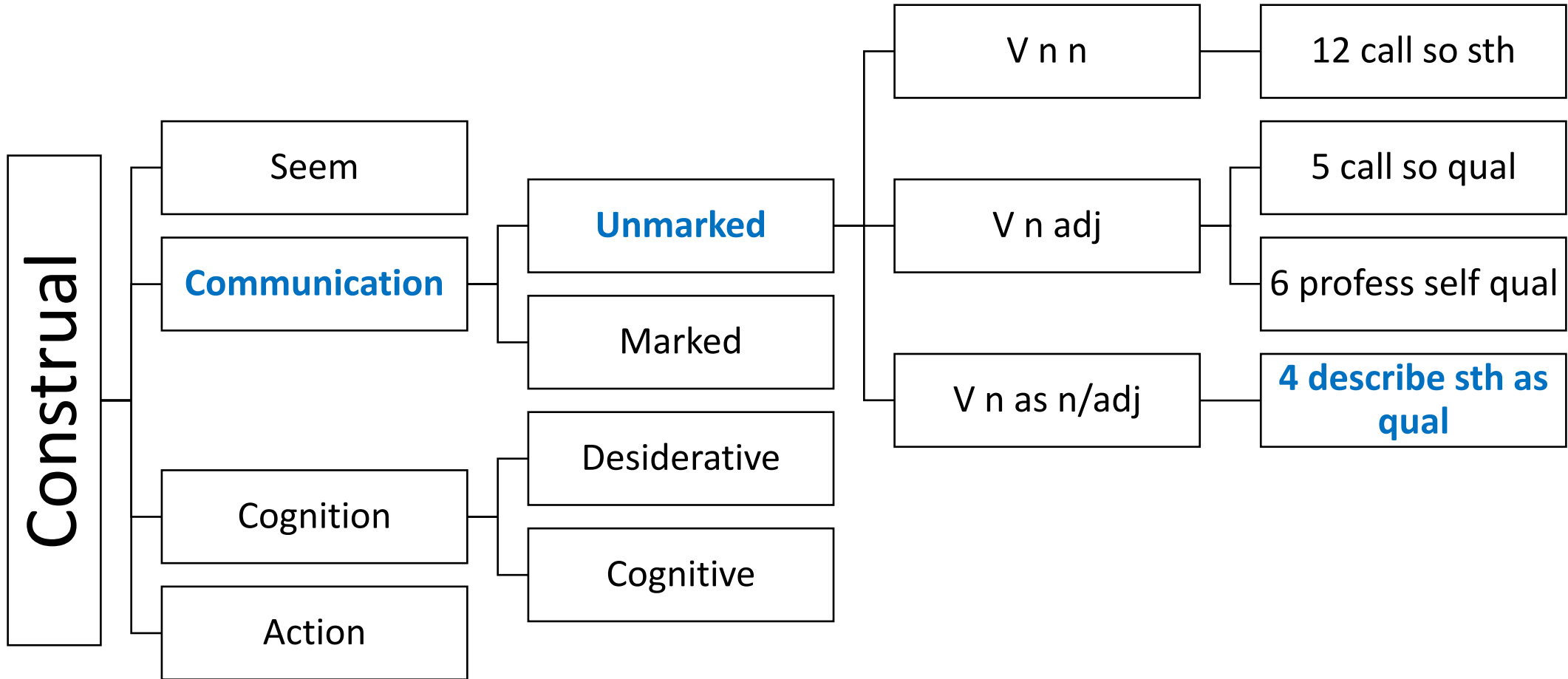
# Some examples: saying and thinking

the sea looked green	she translated the book into Latin	he likes his coffee hot		
	the stars shone bright	it flooded the area with light	she called him a fool	
the crowd divided into two mobs		he remains a bachelor	he cut the bread into slices	they estimated the value at £10
he wiped the slate clean	she progressed to head teacher	she mistook him for her husband	he came across as honest	he appointed her foreign secretary
he described it as an error in judgement		the engine developed a fault		they dressed like teenagers

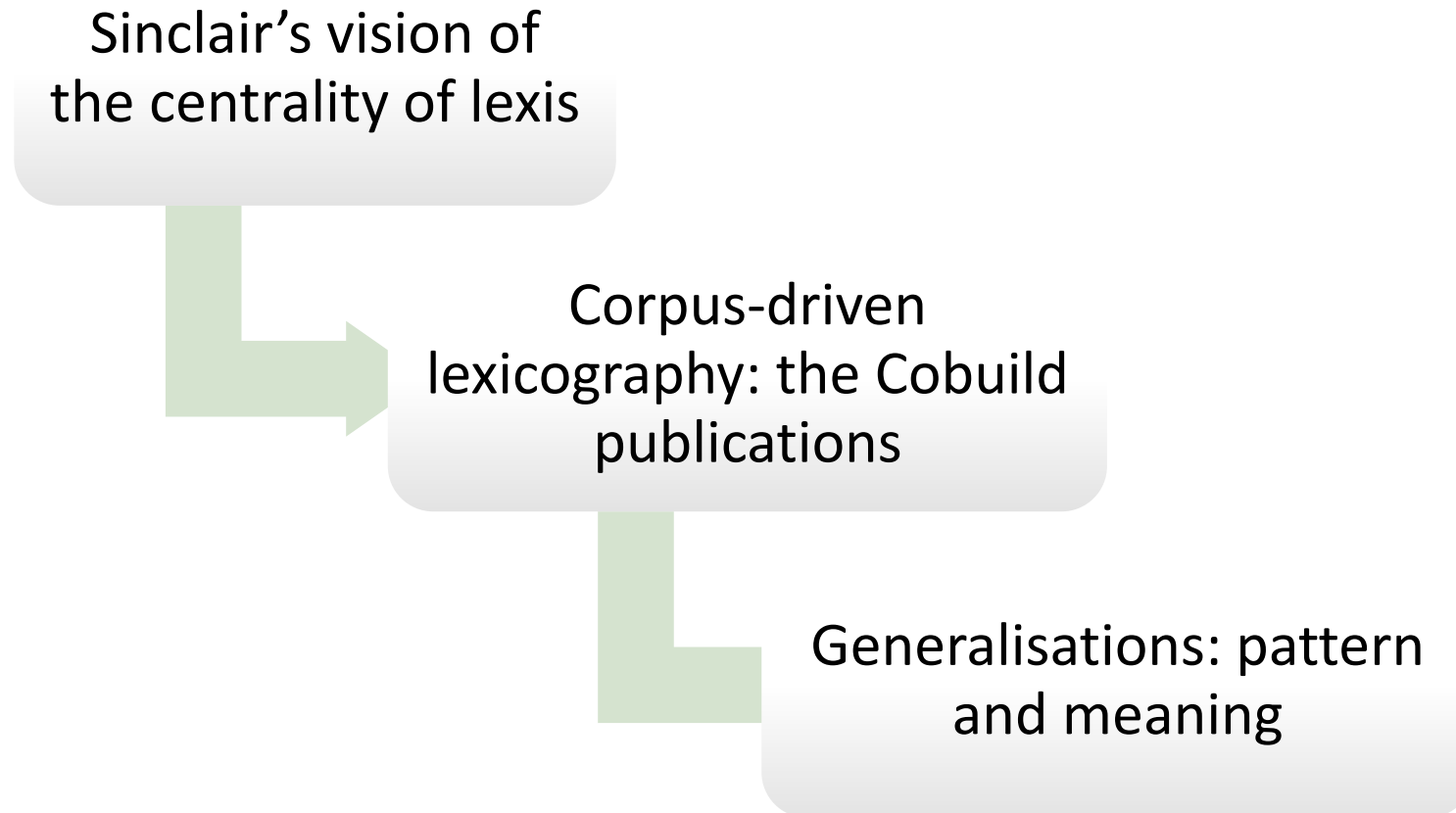
# The Carrier-Attribute Network 1



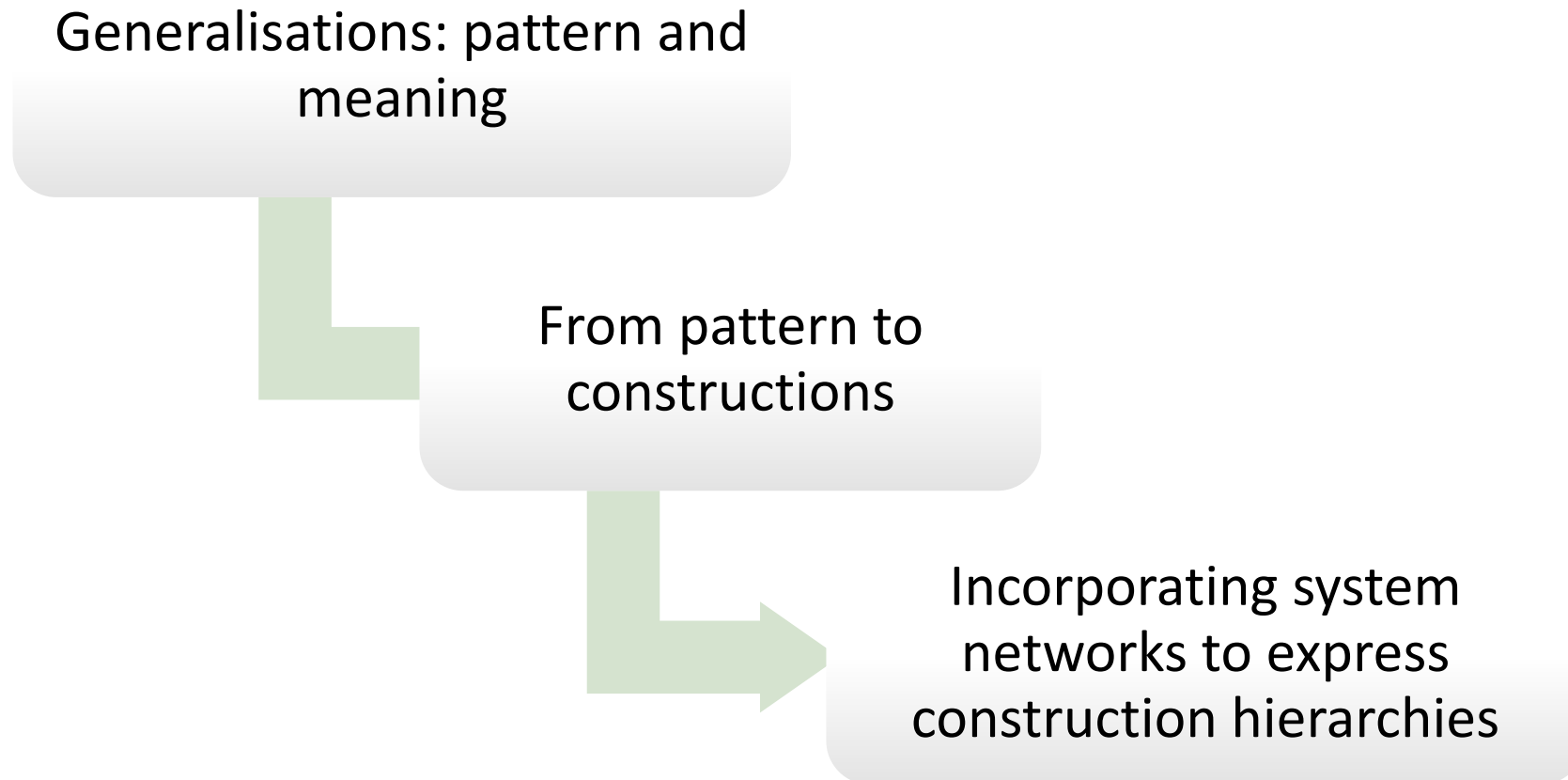
# The Carrier-Attribute Network 2



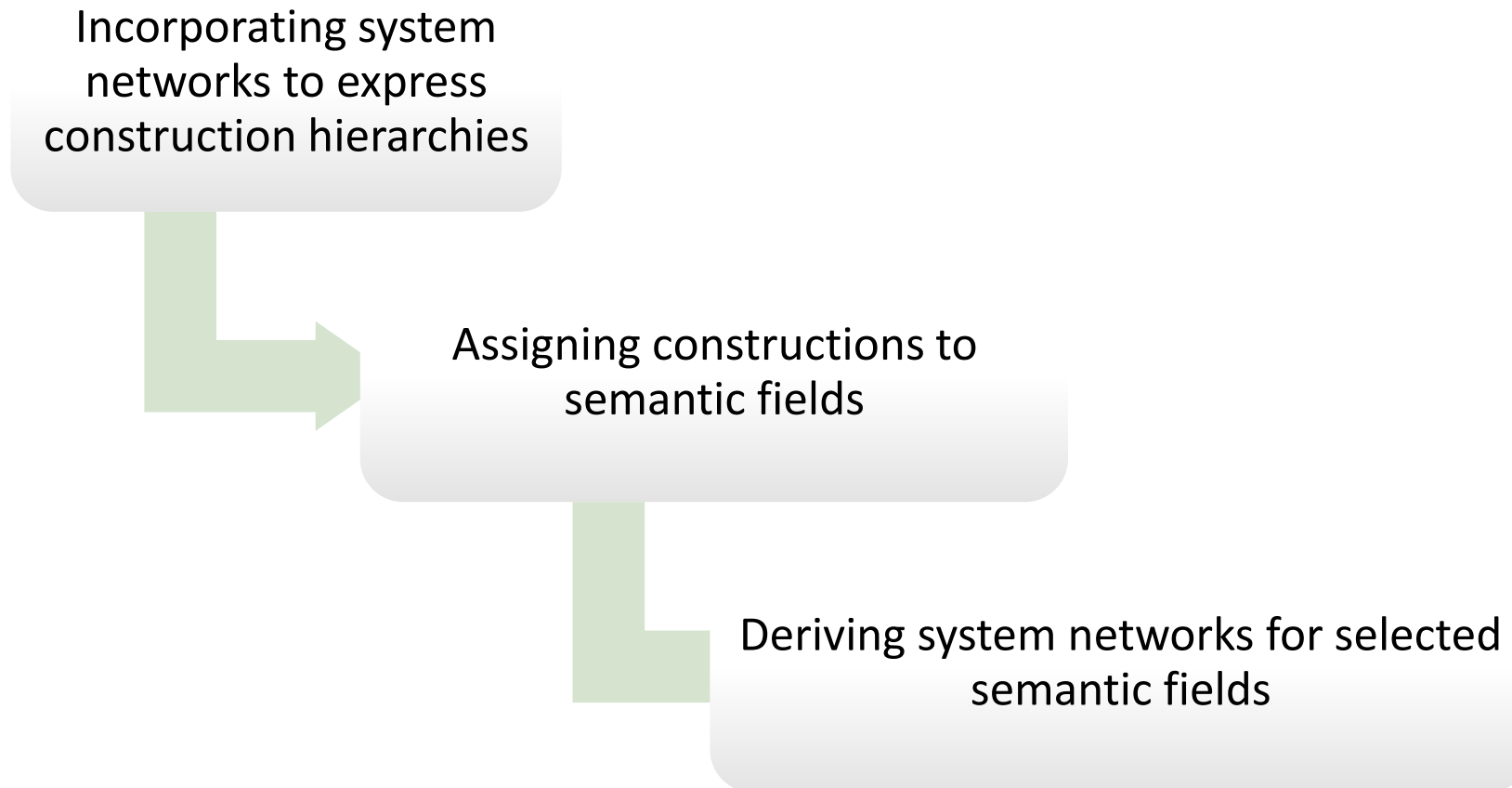
# The journey so far...



# The journey so far...



# The journey so far...





# And the future?

Extending the scope to other patterns?

New learner resources: from meaning to constructions?

Revising the 'lexis' end of the lexicogrammar?

Thank you for listening!

