Computational Semantics Tools for Glue Semantics

Mark-Matthias Zymla University of Konstanz

University of Konstanz mark-matthias.zymla @uni-konstanz.de

Mary Dalrymple

University of Oxford mary.dalrymple @ling-phil.ox.ac.uk

Agnieszka Patejuk

Institute of Computer Science Polish Academy of Sciences aep@ipipan.waw.pl

Abstract

This paper introduces a suite of computational semantic tools for Glue Semantics, an approach to compositionality developed in the context of Lexical Functional Grammar (LFG), but applicable to a variety of syntactic representations, including Universal Dependencies (UD). The three tools are: 1) a Glue Semantics prover, 2) an interface between this prover and a platform for implementing LFG grammars, and 3) a system to rewrite and add semantic annotations to LFG and UD syntactic analyses, with a native support for the prover. The main use of these tools is computational verification of theoretical linguistic analyses, but they have also been used for teaching formal semantic concepts.

1 Introduction

This paper introduces a suite of tools related to Glue Semantics (Dalrymple 1999, Asudeh 2022, 2023), an approach to compositionality based on the idea of resource sensitivity, for a wider computational semantic audience. On this approach, the compositional process is not necessarily determined directly by phrasal constituency (as in, for example, Heim and Kratzer 1998), but is rather guided by pairing (partial) semantic representations with linear logic formulas referring to parts of syntactic representations. While Glue Semantics has been most extensively applied in the context of Lexical Functional Grammar (LFG; Kaplan and Bresnan 1982, Bresnan et al. 2015, Dalrymple et al. 2019, Dalrymple 2023), it has also been successfully combined with other syntactic formalisms, including Universal Dependencies (e.g., Gotham and Haug 2018), Lexicalized Tree Adjoining Grammar (Frank and van Genabith 2001), Head-driven Phrase Structure Grammar (Asudeh and Crouch

2002), and Minimalism (Gotham 2018). It is compatible with various formal meaning representations, including predicate logic with lambdas and DRT (Kamp and Reyle 1993).

Within LFG, computational research evolves around the Xerox Linguistics environment (XLE; Crouch et al. 2017), a platform that has been primarily tailored towards the modeling of syntax. Although XLE grammars are being developed all across the world, the investigation of semantic issues in LFG from a computational perspective received impetus with the introduction of an early version of the Glue Semantics Workbench (GSWB; Meßmer and Zymla 2018).² This paper presents new contributions to GSWB and two recently developed resources that make use of it.³

The central resource presented in this paper is the Glue Semantics Workbench (GSWB), a modular system for calculating Glue Semantics (henceforth, Glue) proofs. It provides three different Glue provers and is designed to permit the implementation of additional provers based on varying linear logic fragments and meaning languages (e.g., predicate logic with lambdas, DRT, etc.).

The second tool, XLE+Glue, implements an interface between GSWB and XLE.⁴ This tool allows users to specify semantic contributions of lexical items and syntactic rules in XLE grammars, which can then be fed into GSWB for semantic calculation. The system has been mainly developed to explore what is called a "co-descriptive approach" to Glue (explained in §2.2). XLE+Glue also illustrates the possibility of GSWB to work with different meaning languages.

¹Early versions of two of these tools have been presented LFG-internally, the third is presented here for the first time.

²Earlier works in computational semantics related to LFG include Asher and Wada 1988, Crouch 2005, Crouch and King 2006, Bobrow et al. 2007, Lev 2007.

³See §3 for links to Github repositories of these resources.

⁴The original idea is presented in Dalrymple et al. 2020.

This paper presents further developments.

The third tool presented in this paper is a system for linguistic graph expansion and rewriting (LiGER). It is inspired by the original XLE transfer system, which was initially used for machine translation (Frank 1999) and later mainly for semantic parsing (Crouch 2005, Crouch and King 2006), but also as a full-fledged reasoning engine (Bobrow et al. 2007), indicating its versatility. LiGER has been developed because the original transfer component of XLE is no longer supported by XLE. Like the original transfer system, LiGER can be used to enrich XLE analyses with information from other linguistic resources. With respect to semantic analysis, it provides the possibility of exploring the second major approach to deriving Glue representations, "description-by-analysis" (see §2.2), and thus complements XLE+Glue.

Overall, the tools presented here allow researchers to experiment with different settings within the Glue framework, including the choice of a suitable linear logic fragment, the choice of meaning language, and the choice of co-description vs. description-by-analysis approaches to deriving meaning representations. The goal of this paper is to illustrate the capabilities of these tools and how they can be used for verifying theoretical analyses and for exploring formal semantic concepts. Section 2 explains the LFG architecture, focusing on two aspects: the projection structure and Glue. Section 3 describes the three tools in more detail, while §4 mentions some use cases. Section 5 concludes.

2 Background

Within the LFG community, the development of XLE grammars, as well as associated resources such as treebanks, is carried out mainly in the scope of the Parallel Grammar (ParGram) project (Butt et al. 2002, Sulger et al. 2013). Such grammars have been developed for a wide variety of typologically diverse languages, demonstrating the cross-linguistic and formal validity of LFG's (morpho)syntactic component.⁵ The work presented in this paper aims to facilitate extending such syntac-

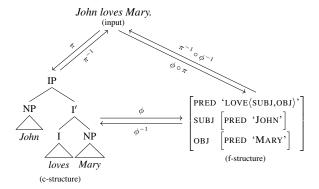


Figure 1: LFG correspondence structure as implemented in XLE

tic work to semantics. This section first describes the underlying concepts of the LFG formalism, and then the LFG approach to semantics.

2.1 LFG projection architecture

LFG is developed around the idea of mutually constraining parallel representations. The two syntactic representations, implemented in XLE, are c(onstituent)-structure and f(unctional)-structure (cf. Figure 1). While c-structure encodes the surface structure in terms of a constituent parse that preserves linear word order, f-structure encodes functional information, primarily grammatical functions and morphosyntactic features, in an attribute-value matrix. Grammars encode both structures simultaneously. C-structures are constrained by phrase structure rules (as in the first row in (1)), with categories specified in lexical entries (see "N" in (2)). F-structures are constrained using functional annotations (usually equations) in phrase-structure rules and lexical entries.

(1) IP
$$\rightarrow$$
 NP I' $(\uparrow SUBJ) = \downarrow \uparrow = \downarrow$

(2) John N (
$$\uparrow$$
 PRED) = 'JOHN'

This simultaneous specification of two levels is called local co-description (Bresnan et al. 2015). In this architecture, the different structures are related via projection functions. This ensures structural correspondence between different levels of analysis and entails mutual accessibility of projections.

Consider Figure 1. The c-structure is generated from the input via the π -projection – a constituent parse. The f-structure is specified based on constraints that are annotated on c-structure nodes and specified in the lexicon. The corresponding mapping function from c- to f-structure is encoded in the ϕ -projection. The mapping from the input to

⁵Some of the grammars that are publicly available for testing via INESS (https://clarino.uib.no/iness/xle-web; Rosén et al. 2012), and some that are not yet publicly available (in parentheses), are:

Larger grammars for English, German, French, Norwegian, and Polish (as well as Chinese and Japanese)

⁽ii) Smaller grammars for Georgian, Indonesian, Malagasy, Turkish, Welsh, Wolof, and Urdu (as well as Greek and Hungarian)

f-structure is a combination of the two projections: the $\phi \circ \pi$ mapping.⁶ LFG also assumes an inverse of each mapping function; while such inverse mappings are less often discussed, they play a role in the possibility of generation, as explored in early work within XLE.⁷

The next section discusses two ways of integrating semantics into the LFG projection architecture.

2.2 Semantics in LFG

Adding any projection that preserves the kind of bi-directionality described in the previous section to this framework is a challenge, and this also holds for the semantic projection. It is beyond the scope of this paper to delve into all the fine details of semantics in LFG, but we briefly address some of the main challenges that the tools presented here may help address. For this purpose, we first provide a quick introduction to Glue, which is a semantic formalism that has been developed for LFG but is generally applicable to different linguistic frameworks, making the present tools interesting for projects that go beyond LFG as well.

The formalism of Glue is modeled around the idea of resource sensitivity (Dalrymple 1999). Resource management is ensured by the use of a fragment of the resource-sensitive linear logic (Girard 1987) that is paired with a meaning representation, forming a meaning constructor. Example (3) shows meaning constructors for all words in John loves Mary. In this example, each word in the sentence introduces a single meaning constructor. In (3), the meaning representation j of the subject John is associated with the resource g, the meaning m of the object Mary is associated with the resource h, and the more complex meaning of the verb loves is associated with the linear logic formula $g \multimap (h \multimap f)$. This formula uses the

linear implication \multimap to indicate that it requires the resource in its antecedent to produce the resource in its consequent. Thus, by consuming the subject resource g, we can produce the resource $(h \multimap f)$, which in turn consumes the object resource h to produce the final result f corresponding to the meaning of the full sentence; see the full Glue proof in (4). In line with the Curry-Howard isomorphism (CHI), modus ponens on the linear logic side corresponds to function application on the meaning side.

(3) John
$$j: g$$

Mary $m: h$
 $loves \lambda x.\lambda y.love(x, y): g \multimap (h \multimap f)$

$$(4) \qquad \frac{\lambda x.\lambda y.love(x,y): g \multimap (h \multimap f) \quad j:g}{\frac{\lambda y.love(j,y): h \multimap f}{love(j,m): f}} \ m:h$$

This relation between resource consumption and semantic composition is the foundation of Glue. As long as the CHI is preserved, different fragments of linear logic can be paired with different meaning representations, resulting in two dimensions of variation.

Additionally, as mentioned above, Glue has been combined with different syntactic theories, assuming different approaches to the syntax/semantics interface. In this paper, we briefly discuss the two main such approaches explored in LFG: codescription (Kaplan and Wedekind 1993) and description by analysis (Halvorsen and Kaplan 1988).

In the co-descriptive approach, particular to LFG, meaning constructors are introduced in lexical entries (and, possibly, grammatical rules), in parallel with categorical and functional information. This is illustrated on the left-hand side of Figure 2. The lexical entries use the \uparrow -variable to refer to specific elements in the f-structure. The nominal entries specify the semantics for the substructures they contribute (corresponding to g and g at the bottom of the figure). The inflected verb uses the functional descriptions (\uparrow SUBJ) and (\uparrow OBJ) to retrieve these substructures via their indices to form the meaning constructor of the verb.

On the other hand, description-by-analysis uses a fully assembled f-structure as input to derive meaning constructors. This is usually done by rules that match partial f-structure descriptions and introduce corresponding meaning constructors; see the right-hand side of Figure 2. There, #f, #g, and #h are variables referring to f-structures (see the corresponding f, g, and h at the bottom of Figure 2),

⁶The projection structure is usually depicted in linear order on a form-to-meaning mapping (Kaplan 1995, Asudeh 2006); however, to avoid directionality, we present the projection structure as a (complete) graph, with no order between nodes since the order might well change depending on specific processing tasks (Jackendoff 2010).

⁷Both parsing and generation are in principle undecidable in LFG and require additional constraints on the formalism to be made workable (Kaplan and Bresnan 1982). See Wedekind 1988 for early LFG work on generation from a separate semantic structure, i.e., involving an inverse of the mapping from semantics to the surface string, and Wedekind and Kaplan 2020 and Kaplan and Wedekind 2019 for more recent work. Such work motivates the existence of inverse projection mappings, and such mappings are assumed in this paper.

⁸This is not a rule; a word can introduce any number of meaning constructors, and meaning constructors may also be introduced by syntactic rules.

co-description:

```
\begin{array}{lll} \mbox{John} & \mbox{N} & (\mbox{$\uparrow$ PRED$}) = \mbox{$'$ JOHN'$} \\ \mbox{$j:\uparrow$} \\ \mbox{Mary} & \mbox{N} & (\mbox{$\uparrow$ PRED$}) = \mbox{$'$ MARY'$} \\ \mbox{$m:\uparrow$} \\ \mbox{loves} & \mbox{I} & (\mbox{$\uparrow$ PRED$}) = \mbox{$'$ LOVE$} \langle \mbox{SUBJ}, \mbox{OBJ} \rangle \\ \mbox{$\lambda x. \lambda y. love$} (x,y): \\ \mbox{$(\uparrow$ SUBJ) } - \circ ((\mbox{$\uparrow$ OBJ) } - \circ \uparrow)$ \end{array}
```

```
description-by-analysis:
```

```
#f SUBJ #g PRED %g ==> #g GLUE %g : #g.

#f OBJ #h PRED %h ==> #h GLUE %h : #h.

#f SUBJ #g & #f OBJ #h & #f PRED %f
==> #f GLUE %f : #g -o (#h -o #f).
```

result (for both approaches):

```
f\begin{bmatrix} \mathsf{PRED} \text{ `LOVE} \langle \mathsf{SUBJ}, \mathsf{OBJ} \rangle \\ \mathsf{SUBJ} \text{ } g \big[ \mathsf{PRED} \text{ 'JOHN'} \big] \\ \mathsf{OBJ} \text{ } h \big[ \mathsf{PRED} \text{ 'MARY'} \big] \end{bmatrix} \qquad \qquad \begin{aligned} j &: g \\ m &: h \\ \lambda x. \lambda y. love(x, y) &: g \multimap (h \multimap f) \end{aligned}
```

Figure 2: Co-descriptive lexicon vs. description-by-analysis rules

used as resources in the linear logic side of the introduced meaning constructors, while %f, %g, and %h refer to the corresponding PRED values and are used in the meaning sides. The first two rules introduce resources for the subject and the object, while the rule for the verb specifies the meaning constructor in a way similar to the co-descriptive approach. This means that both approaches generally map the same kind of nodes onto meaning constructors as indicated by the f-structure and the corresponding instantiated meaning constructors to its right (see the indices g, h, and f there).

Both co-description and description-by-analysis are currently in use in theoretical LFG work; it might well be the case that it is best to combine the two approaches to deal with different kinds of semantic phenomena. The present tool suite is designed to allow for this.

2.3 Semantic autonomy

The flexibility in modeling the syntax/semantics interface is due to one of the key advantages of Glue Semantics: a high level of semantic autonomy (Asudeh 2004). As Figure 2 suggests, semantic composition does not rely on word order – it relies instead on more general concepts such as grammatical functions. Furthermore, semantic autonomy provides a purely semantic treatment of quantification, one that is independent of syntactic considerations such as, for instance, quantifier raising (Heim and Kratzer 1998). This is illustrated in Figure 3 on the basis of quantifier scope ambiguity. For a more in-depth discussion on quantifier scope,

see, e.g., Gotham (2019, 2021), Dalrymple et al. (1999). Semantic autonomy provides a unique view on formal semantics that can be explored using the tools presented in this paper.

2.4 Related work

The tools presented here are inspired by work in grammar engineering (e.g., Flickinger et al. 2017) and semantic annotation (e.g., Basile et al. 2012). There is also some overlap with toolkits such as the NLTK (Bird et al. 2009). The main difference is a focus on Glue Semantics and its compositional properties, as well as its relation to various syntactic approaches, especially LFG and Universal Dependencies (UD). The present tools have not yet been employed in large-scale grammar engineering efforts, but rather at the interface between formal and computational linguistics to verify analyses (but see Zymla et al. 2025, Findlay et al. 2023).

3 The tools

ParGram project provided linguistically informed approach to syntactic and semantic parsing, though the latter was mostly worked out for English, while concrete implementations for other languages were of limited scope. This is largely due to the fact that the semantics relied heavily on various external resources that were not available cross-linguistically. Semantic parsing relied on ordered rewriting rules implemented as part of a transfer system in XLE (Crouch and King 2006, Bobrow et al. 2007). Another important issue addressed with the present tools is that the existing transfer system is neither publicly available nor compatible with the currently available XLE releases provided by

⁹It seems that description-by-analysis may be more suitable for the semantic interpretation of functional features, whereas phenomena involving information structure are more suitably encoded in a co-descriptive fashion (Andrews 2008).

Every monkey likes a banana.

Figure 3: **Quantification in Glue:** Quantifier scope falls out naturally from the properties of linear logic, giving appropriate typings. Implication introduction (lambda abstraction) allows to capture flexible scope configurations (the alternative reading for this example is shown in Figure 7 in appendix A).

the University of Konstanz. ¹⁰ The tools described below are open source and compatible with various systems, including XLE, and they are designed to be useful in theoretical linguistic work as well as in investigation of general issues of integrating semantics into the LFG projection architecture.

3.1 The Glue Semantics Workbench

The Glue Semantics Workbench (GSWB)¹¹ is a modular system for deriving Glue proofs. To this end, it provides the possibility of using different provers as well as different input formats for meaning languages, with a built-in parser for formulas based on typed lambda-calculus, and support for meaning representations written in Prolog (in particular, those developed on the basis of Blackburn and Bos 2005, i.e., untyped lambda calculus and λ -DRT). Furthermore, functionality was recently added that allows users to interface GSWB with NLTK's (Bird et al. 2009) semantic capabilities (Klein 2006).

GSWB uses a string format for linear logic and semantic representations that is close to actual Glue semantic representations, as illustrated in (5).

There, the meaning side is on the left of:, and the linear logic side is on the right. The entry for the verb shows the encoding of complex linear logic formulas and lambda expressions which can be computed using the basic tools for function appli-

cation (Blackburn and Bos 2005).

To ensure flexibility, the meaning side of a meaning constructor can be replaced with any semantic representation that can be encoded as a string. In this case, users can specify procedures that preserve CHI, by implementing function application directly in GSWB or by feeding the output to a separate system. ¹² The latter option is used to integrate GSWB with a modified version of the DRT part of Boxer tools (Bos 2008; based on Blackburn and Bos 2005) and with NLTK (Findlay et al. 2023).

GSWB contains three different provers for the implicational fragment of linear logic: one with linear quantification (prover 1) and two variants of a prover without linear quantification (prover 2). Both variants of prover 2 are based on Hepple 1996 and Lev 2007, but one is extended with a notation for conducting multistage proving (Findlay and Haug 2022), a process that essentially allows for the grouping of meaning constructors to constrain the order of application. This is one way of accounting for restrictions on scope-taking expressions like quantifiers, embedding verbs, etc.

These provers provide separate additional functionalities for exploring the resulting Glue derivations, including reasons why a derivation might fail. Specifically, prover 1 has two functionalities. First, it allows for a depth-first search of intermediate results in a failed proof, extracting those partial solutions that would need to be combined to find a successful proof. Second, it allows the proofs to be given in natural deduction form. This is illustrated in Figure 4 based on (5).

The two variants of prover 2 also allow users to visualize a derivation. More specifically, they

¹⁰ling.sprachwiss.uni-konstanz.de/pages/xle/

¹¹https://github.com/Mmaz1988/GlueSemWorkbench_
v2

¹²For a string a corresponding to a function and an argument string b, the default procedure produces the string a(b).

Figure 4: Natural deduction proof by GSWB, based on meaning constructors in (5)

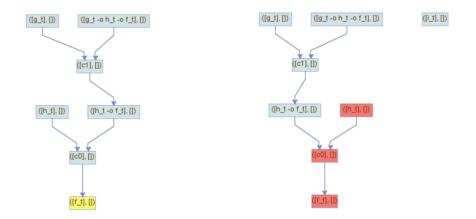


Figure 5: Successful derivation graph for the proof in (4) and an alternative failed derivation graph: The graph on the left presents input meaning constructors and combination steps as blue nodes and highlights the goal category in yellow. The graph on the right is based on an erroneous input that is superficially similar to (4). Missing resources (leaves of the graph) and failed derivation steps are marked in red so as to make it easier to debug the proof. The proof fails since h is required by the verb as a resource corresponding to the object. However, in this unsuccessful proof the object was assigned the resource i, which is a dangling node since it has no consumer.

produce a derivation graph. This graph roughly corresponds to a proof tree but highlights cyclic elements in the derivation (indicating compositional ambiguities), if present (cf. Lev 2007: ch. 6). Figure 5 illustrates the visualization. (The derivation there does not have any cyclic elements.)¹³

Current and future developments of GSWB are mainly geared toward the interpretability of the output of GSWB, as illustrated in Figures 4–5, as well as the integration in broader processing pipelines. This is illustrated by reference to the next two tools, which use the capabilities presented above.

3.2 XLE+Glue

XLE+Glue has been developed as an interface between XLE and GSWB corresponding to LFG+Glue in the theoretical literature. It is integrated into the XLE user interface and can be used out of the box.

The original version¹⁴ consists of a specification for Glue meaning constructors in terms of attribute-value matrices that can be represented as part of

f-structures (Dalrymple et al. 2020).

Example (7) illustrates the encoding of the Glue meaning constructor in (6) as an AVM in an f-structure. As shown there, linear logic resources are added via the GLUE attribute, whose value is a set of semantic representations. These are described in terms of AVMs encoding their MEANING side (simply a string corresponding to the meaning) and their linear logic side. The latter uses nested expressions to reflect linear implication: ARG1 and ARG2 refer to linear logic resources (not semantic arguments) that need to be consumed to produce the resource f with type t.

(6)
$$love: g_e \multimap (h_e \multimap f_t)$$

$$[7] \quad f \quad \begin{cases} PRED \text{ 'LOVE} < SUBJ, OBJ >' \\ SUBJ \quad g [\] \\ OBJ \quad h [\] \end{cases}$$

$$[7] \quad f \quad \begin{cases} MEANING \quad LOVE \\ ARG1 \quad \begin{bmatrix} RESOURCE \quad g \\ TYPE \quad e \end{bmatrix} \\ ARG2 \quad \begin{bmatrix} RESOURCE \quad h \\ TYPE \quad e \end{bmatrix} \\ RESOURCE \quad f \\ TYPE \quad t \end{cases}$$

¹³While this example is trivial, finding errors in more complex proofs can be difficult, especially when manually working with the GSWB.

¹⁴https://github.com/Mmaz1988/
xle-glueworkbench-interface

More recently, a version with an alternative notation for meaning constructors has been developed that is closer to their representation in formal semantic theory. The alternative notation is similar to that of GSWB but uses references to f-structure nodes, as in Figure 2 on the left. This is illustrated in (8).

(8)
$$[/x_e.[/y_e.P(x,y)]]:$$
 $((^SUBJ)_e -o ((^OBJ)_e -o ^_t))$

While the notation is different, the implementation boils down to the idea of the original XLE+Glue. However, now, when loading a grammar in XLE, meaning constructors written as in (8) are automatically translated into AVM representations by a script, making the grammars leaner. Furthermore, such meaning constructors may be easier to read than the nested templates necessary to encode meaning constructors in the original approach.

This approach is, in principle, an implementation of the co-descriptive approach to Glue since the templates are generally called from the lexicon. The XLE+Glue repository provides several sample XLE grammars containing templates that produce the corresponding meaning constructors. These grammars exhibit the various parameters along which XLE+Glue can be tweaked: it allows for exploring different meaning languages (currently, first-order logic and λ -DRT), and it enables the user to specify meaning constructors in the f-structure or in a separate semantic structure. Furthermore, although the current paper presents XLE+Glue as a venue for exploring co-descriptive approaches to Glue, it is, in fact, more flexible, since the Glue AVMs corresponding to meaning constructors need not be specified in the lexicon. They could be specified via rewrite rules or, possibly, in other ways. However, since it is the only resource in this paper making a concrete proposal for exploring semantic co-description, it is unique in this regard.

On the technical side, XLE+Glue consists of an extension to the XLE user interface and a translation component that rewrites the specified meaning constructors into a format compatible with GSWB. Thus, XLE+Glue is, essentially, an interface between XLE and GSWB.

3.3 Linguistic Graph Expansion and Rewriting

The Linguistic Graph Expansion and Rewriting (LiGER)¹⁷ tool allows for the specification of rules that rewrite and expand f-structure nodes, as shown in Figure 2 on the right. The system is based on graph matching techniques, but also provides tools to check for certain LFG-specific relations such as (inside-out) functional uncertainty. The graphs are described in terms of queries inspired by corpus search engines, in particular the one designed for LFG within INESS (Rosén et al. 2012; https://clarino.uib.no/iness/). Before querying, the system translates f-structures into more general graph structures. This mechanism is inspired by the original XLE transfer system (Crouch et al. 2017, Ide and Bunt 2010), but it is applicable beyond the annotations provided by the XLE. For example, it provides an interface to the Stanford Universal Dependency parser (Manning et al. 2014). Generally speaking, it is mainly geared towards the analysis of directed (acyclic) graphs that underlie many syntactic analyses.

Figure 6 illustrates normalization from syntactic representations to directed graphs. Given this kind of normalization, the system can be combined with various linguistic resources to either specify structural correspondences or expand graphs with additional information. The primary use of the system is currently the specification of semantic rules inspired by the description-by-analysis tradition in Glue (Kaplan and Wedekind 1993). It combines insights from computational approaches, e.g., Crouch 2005 and Crouch and King 2006, with more recent theoretical approaches (Andrews 2008, 2010). The former employ a destructive approach during which a given f-structure is taken as input to a set of ordered rewrite rules. These rules incrementally consume parts of the f-structure to produce semantic constraints, sometimes involving intermediate representations and access to external resources (e.g., for lexical semantics). Thus, the inverse mapping from semantics to syntax is not trivially recoverable. 18 By contrast, the theoretical approach involves working towards a structurepreserving implementation, i.e., a monotonic approach to description-by-analysis, more clearly maintaining LFG's bi-directionality. This choice is

¹⁵https://github.com/Mmaz1988/xleplusglue

¹⁶The original translation component was written in Prolog. For the new system, the scripts have been moved to a Java implementation.

¹⁷https://github.com/Mmaz1988/abstract-syntax-annotator-web

¹⁸See Zarrieβ and Kuhn (2010) for discussion.

UD structure:

John loves Mary NNP/1/g VBD/2/f NNP/3/h

LFG structure:

$$f \begin{bmatrix} \mathsf{PRED} \;\; \mathsf{`LOVE} \langle \mathsf{SUBJ}, \mathsf{OBJ} \rangle \mathsf{'} \\ \mathsf{SUBJ} \;\; g \left[\mathsf{PRED} \;\; \mathsf{`JOHN'} \right] \\ \mathsf{OBJ} \;\;\; h \left[\mathsf{PRED} \;\; \mathsf{`MARY'} \right] \end{bmatrix}$$

Abstract syntactic graph:

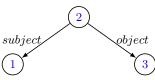


Figure 6: Parallelized syntax for: John loves Mary

not constrained by LiGER, but rather by how the system is used. Thus, it is well-suited to explore the notion of description-by-analysis.

LiGER is implemented in Java as an application and a web service in parallel, so it can be used in web-based applications and more traditional annotation pipelines. As indicated above, it is compatible with Universal Dependencies (as provided by Stanford CoreNLP) and XLE representations. It can also be used to call the corresponding parsers from their respective resources.

4 Use cases

At this stage of development, XLE+Glue and LiGER have not been widely used for broad coverage semantic parsing (but see Findlay et al. 2023 for a broad coverage use of the GSWB). However, they have already been employed for verification of theoretical LFG+Glue analyses (see §4.1), for a teaching grammar (see §4.2), and for research on ambiguity management (see §4.3).

4.1 Verification of theoretical analyses

The tools described above have been used to verify theoretical analyses. For example, GSWB has been employed in an investigation of scope interactions between nominal and verbal quantifiers (Zymla and Sigwarth 2019), LiGER in an analysis of Greek tense and aspect (Zymla and Fiotaki 2021), and XLE+Glue in an account of gapping (Przepiórkowski and Patejuk 2023).

In particular, Przepiórkowski and Patejuk 2023 propose a theoretical LFG+Glue analysis of gapping, as in English *Marge saw Lisa and Homer Bart*, with the second conjunct meaning 'Homer saw Bart'. The analysis crucially relies on Champollion's (2015) compositional treatment of event semantics and is relatively complex, to the extent that it is not trivial to manually verify its predictions for more complex cases, such as (9), which is expected to have the two readings in (10)–(11).

- (9) Tracy introduced Lisa to Marge and Bart to Homer.
- (10) $[\exists e. introduce(e) \land agent(e, t) \land \\ theme(e, l) \land beneficiary(e, m)] \land \\ [\exists e. introduce(e) \land agent(e, t) \land \\ \underline{theme(e, b)} \land beneficiary(e, h)]$
 - 'Tracy introduced Lisa to Marge and <u>Tracy</u> introduced <u>Bart</u> to Homer.'
- (11) $[\exists e.introduce(e) \land agent(e,t) \land \\ theme(e,l) \land beneficiary(e,m)] \land \\ [\exists e.introduce(e) \land \underline{agent(e,b)} \land \\ \underline{theme(e,l)} \land beneficiary(e,h)]$

'Tracy introduced Lisa to Marge and <u>Bart</u> introduced Lisa to Homer.'

However, using XLE+Glue, the formal analysis was implemented as an XLE grammar and all reading were derived automatically. In the case of (9), they all turned out to be equivalent to (10) or (11).

4.2 Teaching grammar

A different application of the presented suite of Glue tools concerns a teaching grammar implementing analyses of some phenomena encountered in a grammar development class, especially tense and aspect.

Using GSWB and LiGER, the grammar produces DRT representations based on the Boxer tools exemplifying a Neo-Davidsonian event semantics. An example is shown in (12). There, x1 refers to an event with two arguments, x2 and x3. These are enumerated based on an argument hierarchy (Bresnan and Kanerva 1989). For the purpose of this paper, arg1 generally refers to an agentive role, arg2 refers to a theme/patient role, and arg3 generally refers to a recipient/goal role. ¹⁹

(12) Mary hugged a bear.

¹⁹Thus, the argument roles are comparable to those in the PropBank (Palmer et al. 2005), but they are not verb-specific.

```
| x2 x3 x1
|-------
| bear(x2)
| x3 = Mary
| hug(x1)
| arg1(x1,x3)
| arg2(x1,x2)
```

Appendix B contains additional examples of DRSs produced by the grammar on the basis of meaning constructors derived by LiGER from f-structures.

For example, we have added to the grammar some basic LiGER rules for tense/aspect interpretation. In this case, the importance of LiGER lies in contextualizing tense/aspect features according to their morphosyntactic context and beyond. This is illustrated in example (13) below, where the interpretation of the embedded tense is constrained by the matrix tense. To put it concisely, the embedded tense must be evaluated relative to the matrix tense and it may only be evaluated as simultaneous or anterior to it as indicated by the two readings of (13) shown in (14)–(15). This is explained in more detail in Zymla 2017, 2018. Furthermore, this example illustrates differences between perfective (bounded) and imperfective (ongoing) grammatical aspect in the matrix clause and embedded clause respectively (see Zymla 2019 for details).

- (13) Mary said that Susan was hugging a bear.
- (14) Mary said: Susan is hugging a bear.
- (15) Mary said: Susan was hugging a bear.

```
1 x9 x8 x7 x6
 x9 = now
 before (x8.x9)
 x7 = Mary
 bounded(x6, x8)
 say (x6)
 arg1(x6,x7)
      1 x5 x4 x2
        bear(x5)
        nonfut(x2, x6)
                                   х3
        1 x1
          ongoing(x1,x2)
                                    partOf(x3,x1)
                                    hug(x3)
                                    arg2(x3,x5)
                                    arg1(x3,x4)
```

As these examples show, the teaching grammar combined with LiGER allows us to capture important syntactic and semantic generalizations and, thus, explore substantial insights into the interplay between syntax and semantics. Importantly, the grammar also illustrates the distinction between

co-description and description-by-analysis pointed out in the previous sections.

4.3 Exploring the cross-linguistic variability of semantic ambiguities

Moot and Retoré (2012) point out that semantic composition does not fall into one neatly categorized logic but rather moves on a spectrum of constrainedness of the underlying logic. Works like Gotham 2019, 2021, building on Barker 2022, explore subtle cross-linguistic differences in the flexibility of scope-taking semantic operators that highlight this issue. Constraints on semantic composition have been explored in the context of computational grammars and Glue semantics in Findlay and Haug 2022 and Zymla 2024 using the GSWB. This research not only improves the formal adequacy of LFG, but potentially also allows for more precise statements about the logic of composition more generally and its interaction with other modules of grammar, particularly, from a cross-linguistic perspective. Relatedly, Butt et al. (2024) present an approach to disambiguating questions via prosodic information that is computationally implemented in combination with XLE+Glue.

5 Summary

This paper has presented a suite of computational tools for Glue Semantics. It has established their relevance for exploring various important concepts, particularly how to embed a semantic component in the LFG projection architecture as implemented within XLE. In this regard, both a co-descriptive and a description-by-analysis approach have been presented, covering the two major proposals for semantic analysis in LFG.

The tools presented in this paper contribute to a growing ecosystem of LFG-based CL tools which are actively developed on multiple fronts. They receive regular updates and new features.

However, it is not only the LFG community that may benefit from these tools. Glue Semantics is compatible with various kinds of syntactic and semantic analyses. From the perspective of NLP, one of the most interesting prospects may be its compatibility with Universal Dependencies (Haug and Findlay 2023), but even beyond that, the tools presented in this paper provide an exciting avenue for research on formal semantics in computational linguistics.

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A Additional proofs

Figure 7: Glue proof: Every monkey likes a banana inverse scope

B Worked out examples

(16) Mary hugged a bear.

Produced meaning constructors:

```
 \begin{cases} lam(V, lam(X, lam(E, merge(app(V, E), drs([], [rel(arg2, E, X)]))))) : \\ ((6_v - o 6_t) - o (4_e - o (6_v - o 6_t))) & || noscope \\ lam(X, drs([], [eq(X, 'Mary')])) : (8_e - o 8_t) \\ lam(X, drs([], [pred(bear, X)])) : (4_e - o 4_t) \\ lam(V, lam(X, lam(E, merge(app(V, E), drs([], [rel(arg1, E, X)]))))) : \\ ((6_v - o 6_t) - o (8_e - o (6_v - o 6_t))) & || noscope \\ lam(P, lam(Q, merge(drs([X], []), merge(app(P, X), app(Q, X))))) : \\ ((8_e - o 8_t) - o ((8_e - o 5_t) - o 5_t)) & || noscope \\ lam(V, drs([], [pred(hug, V)])) : (6_v - o 6_t) \\ lam(P, lam(Q, merge(drs([X], []), merge(app(P, X), app(Q, X))))) : \\ ((4_e - o 4_t) - o ((4_e - o 5_t) - o 5_t)) \\ lam(V, merge(drs([E], []), app(V, E))) : ((6_v - o 6_t) - o 5_t) \end{cases}
```

F-structure:

```
"Mary hugged a bear"
```

```
PRED 'hug<[1:Mary], [26:bear]>'

1 PRED 'Mary'

SUBJ 66 CASE nom, GEND fem, NTYPE name, NUM sg, PERS 3

68

35 PRED 'bear'

102

OBJ 26

34 CASE acc, DEF -, NTYPE count, NUM sg, PERS 3

104

TNS-ASP MOOD indicative, PERF -_, PROG -_, TENSE past]

124 PASSIVE -
```

(17) Mary was hugged by a bear.

Produced meaning constructors:

F-structure:

"Mary was hugged by a bear"

```
PRED
              'hug<[38:bear], [1:Mary]>'
             1 PRED 'Mary'
            87 CASE nom, GEND fem, NTYPE name, NUM sg, PERS 3
   SUBJ
            89
            56 PRED 'bear'
            32
47 SPEC [DET [PRED 'a']]
           132
            55 DEF -, NTYPE count, NUM sg, PERS 3, PFORM by, PTYPE nosem
26 OBL-AG 134
101
            38
 14
            46
 15
           138
140
150 TNS-ASP
              PERF -_, PROG -_, TENSE past
152 PARTICIPLE past, PASSIVE +
```

(18) Susan was given the bear by Mary.

```
| x2 x3 x4 x1 |
|------|
| bear(x2) |
| x3 = Mary |
| x4 = Susan |
| give(x1) |
| arg3(x1,x4) |
| arg1(x1,x3) |
| arg2(x1,x2) |
```

Produced meaning constructors:

```
 \begin{cases} & \text{lam}(V, \text{merge}(\,\text{drs}\,([E]\,,[])\,, \text{app}(V,E))) \,:\, ((4\_v -o \ 4\_t) -o \ 3\_t) \\ & \text{lam}(P, \text{lam}(Q, \text{merge}(\,\text{drs}\,([X]\,,[])\,, \text{merge}(\,\text{app}(P,X)\,, \text{app}(Q,X))))) \,:\, \\ & \quad ((6\_e -o \ 6\_t) -o \ ((6\_e -o \ 3\_t) -o \ 3\_t)) \,\mid\, |\, \text{noscope} \\ & \text{lam}(V, \text{lam}(X, \text{lam}(E, \text{merge}(\,\text{app}(V,E)\,, \text{drs}\,([]\,,[\,\text{rel}\,(\text{arg}3\,,E,X)]))))) \,:\, \\ & \quad ((4\_v -o \ 4\_t) -o \ (8\_e -o \ (4\_v -o \ 4\_t))) \,\mid\, |\, \text{noscope} \\ & \text{lam}(P, \text{lam}(Q, \text{merge}(\,\text{drs}\,([X]\,,[])\,, \text{merge}(\,\text{app}(P,X)\,, \text{app}(Q,X))))) \,:\, \\ & \quad ((2\_e -o \ 2\_t) -o \ ((2\_e -o \ 3\_t) -o \ 3\_t)) \,\mid\, |\, \text{noscope} \\ & \text{lam}(X, \text{drs}\,([]\,,[\,\text{pred}\,(\text{bear}\,,X)])) \,:\, (2\_e -o \ 2\_t) \\ & \text{lam}(V, \text{lam}(X, \text{lam}(E, \text{merge}\,(\text{app}(V,E)\,, \text{drs}\,([]\,,[\,\text{rel}\,(\text{arg}2\,,E,X)]))))) \,:\, \\ & \quad ((4\_v -o \ 4\_t) -o \ (2\_e -o \ (4\_v -o \ 4\_t))) \,\mid\, |\, \text{noscope} \\ & \text{lam}(X, \text{drs}\,([]\,,[\,\text{eq}(X,'\,\text{Susan}\,')])) \,:\, (8\_e -o \ 8\_t) \\ & \text{lam}(V, \text{lam}(X, \text{lam}(E, \text{merge}\,(\text{app}(V,E)\,, \text{drs}\,([]\,,[\,\text{rel}\,(\text{arg}1\,,E,X)]))))) \,:\, \\ & \quad ((4\_v -o \ 4\_t) -o \ (6\_e -o \ (4\_v -o \ 4\_t))) \,\mid\, |\, \text{noscope} \\ & \text{lam}(P, \text{lam}(Q, \text{merge}\,(\text{drs}\,([X]\,,[])\,, \text{merge}\,(\text{app}(P,X)\,, \text{app}\,(Q,X))))) \,:\, \\ & \quad ((8\_e -o \ 8\_t) -o \ ((8\_e -o \ 3\_t) -o \ 3\_t)) \,\mid\, |\, \text{noscope} \\ & \text{lam}(V, \text{drs}\,([]\,,[\text{pred}\,(\text{give}\,,V)])) \,:\, (4\_v -o \ 4\_t) \\ & \text{lam}(X, \text{drs}\,([]\,,[\text{eq}(X,'\,\text{Mary}\,')])) \,:\, (6\_e -o \ 6\_t) \\ \end{cases}
```

F-structure:

"Susan was given the bear by Mary"

```
PRED
              'give<[87:Mary], [53:bear], [1:Susan]>'
             1 PRED 'Susan'
           125 CASE nom, GEND fem, NTYPE name, NUM sq, PERS 3
           127
           72 PRED 'bear'
           163 DEF +, NTYPE count, NUM sg, PERS 3
   OBJ2
           53
            71
           165
            96 PRED 'Mary'
           177 GEND fem, NTYPE name, NUM sg, PERS 3, PFORM by, PTYPE nosem
139 OBL-AG 179
 14
            9.5
 15
           183
188
202 TNS-ASP
              TENSE past
204 DATIVE-SHIFT +, PARTICIPLE past, PASSIVE +
```

(19) Mary hugged herself.

```
| x2 x3 x1 | |
|------|
| hug(x3) | |
| arg2(x3,x2) |
| arg1(x3,x1) |
| female(x2) |
| x1 = x2 |
| x1 = Mary |
```

Produced meaning constructors:

```
{
    lam(X, drs([],[eq(X,'Mary')])) : (6_e -o 6_t)
    lam(A, alfa(B, refl, pred(female, B), merge(app(A, C), drs([C],
        [pred(female, C), eq(B, C)])))) : ((2_e -o 3_t) -o 3_t)
    lam(V, lam(X, lam(E, merge(app(V, E), drs([], [rel(argl, E, X)]))))) :
        ((4_v -o 4_t) -o (6_e -o (4_v -o 4_t))) || noscope
    lam(P, lam(Q, merge(drs([X], []), merge(app(P, X), app(Q, X))))) :
        ((6_e -o 6_t) -o ((6_e -o 3_t) -o 3_t))
    lam(V, drs([], [pred(hug, V)])) : (4_v -o 4_t)
    lam(V, merge(drs([E], []), app(V, E))) : ((4_v -o 4_t) -o 3_t)
    lam(V, lam(X, lam(E, merge(app(V, E), drs([], [rel(arg2, E, X)]))))) :
        ((4_v -o 4_t) -o (2_e -o (4_v -o 4_t))) || noscope
}
```

F-structure:

"Mary hugged herself"

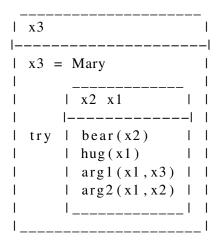
```
PRED 'hug<[1:Mary], [23:herself]>'

1 PRED 'Mary'
SUBJ 61 CASE nom, GEND fem, NTYPE name, NUM sg, PERS 3
63

23 PRED 'herself'
OBJ 24 CASE acc, NTYPE pron, NUM sg, PERS 3, PRON-TYPE pers
86

TNS-ASP MOOD indicative, PERF -_, PROG -_, TENSE past
105 PASSIVE -
```

(20) Mary tried to hug a bear.



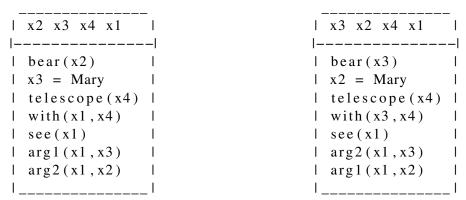
Produced meaning constructors:

F-structure:

```
"Mary tried to hug a bear"
```

```
'try<[1:Mary], [29:hug]>'
   PRED
           1 PRED 'Mary'
   SUBJ
          95 CASE nom, GEND fem, NTYPE name, NUM sg, PERS 3
          97
             PRED
                    'hug<[1:Mary], [55:bear]>'
             SUBJ [1:Mary]
                  64 PRED 'bear'
          39
         124 | 148 | SPEC [DET [PRED 'a']]
   XCOMP 124
                  63 CASE acc, DEF -, NTYPE count, NUM sg, PERS 3
          29
                 150
          37
107
         168 PASSIVE -, VFORM inf
170
173 TNS-ASP [MOOD indicative, PERF -_, PROG -_, TENSE past]
175 VFORM
```

(21) Mary saw the bear with the telescope



Produced meaning constructors:

F-structures:

```
"Mary saw the bear with the telescope"
                                                                                        "Mary saw the bear with the telescope"
      PRED
                'see<[1:Mary], [37:bear]>'
        1[PRED 'Mary'
SUBJ 136 CASE nom, GEND fem, NTYPE name, NUM sg, PERS 3
                                                                                                        'see<[1:Mary], [37:bear]>'
                                                                                                1 PRED 'Mary'
SUBJ 136 CASE nom, GEND fem, NTYPE name, NUM sg, PERS 3
             56 PRED 'bear'
172 CASE acc, DEF +, NTYPE count, NUM sg, PERS
                                                                                                         PRED
                                                                                                                    'bear'
       овј
                                                                                                                                 'with<[86:telescope]>
                                                                                                                        PRED
                                                                                                                             105 PRED 'telescope'
193 CASE acc, DEF +,
                             'with<[86:telescope]>'
                                                                                                                                                    +, NTYPE count, NUM sg, PERS
                      with [otterscope]
105|Reb 'telescope'
193|CASE acc, DEF +, NTYPE count, NUM sg, PERS
30BJ 86
104
195
                                                                                                                         OBJ
                                                                                                                              195
                85 199 PTYPE sem
                                                                                                     201 CASE acc, DEF +, NTYPE count, NUM sg, PERS 3
                                                                                           218 TNS-ASP [MOOD indicative, PERF -_, PROG -_, TENSE past]
        INS-ASP MOOD indicative, PERF -_, PROG -_, TENSE past
```

(22) Mary said that Susan was hugging a bear.

```
1 x9 x8 x7 x6
  x9 = now
 before (x8, x9)
x7 = Mary
  bounded (x6, x8)
  sav(x6)
  arg1(x6,x7)
       1 x5 x4 x2
         bear(x5)
         x4 = Susan
         nonfut(x2,x6)
         1 x1
                                       x3
           ongoing(x1, x2)
                                        partOf(x3,x1)
                                       hug (x3)
arg2 (x3,x5)
                                       arg1(x3,x4)
```

Produced meaning constructors:

F-structure:

"Mary said that Susan hugged a bear"

```
PRED
            'say<[1:Mary], [23:hug]>'
           1 PRED 'Mary'
   SUBJ 123 CASE nom, GEND fem, NTYPE name, NUM sg, PERS 3
         125
                     'hug<[58:Susan], [83:bear]>'
                   58 PRED 'Susan'
            SUBJ 155 CASE nom, GEND fem, NTYPE name, NUM sg, PERS
                  157
                   92 PRED 'bear'
          71
                 191
83 SPEC [DET [PRED 'a']]
    COMP
        167 <sub>OBJ</sub>
         197
                   91 CASE acc, DEF -, NTYPE count, NUM sg, PERS 3
         211
                  193
          2.3
          57 TNS-ASP [MOOD indicative, PERF -_, PROG -_, TENSE past]
135
         213 COMP-FORM that, PASSIVE -
215
218 TNS-ASP [MOOD indicative, PERF -_, PROG -_, TENSE past]
220 ROOT
```