Summary

The present study displays the outcome of my efforts, continued after my postdoc studies on new complementation patterns with verbs of perception in French, to extend and to confirm our knowledge and understanding of grammar and language change, more precisely the type of language change known as grammaticalization. The term grammaticalization covers two processes; on the one hand, the process where lexical entities are reanalysed as grammatical entities, on the other hand, the process when grammatical entities enter new grammatical contexts. Grammaticalization is viewed as a panchronic concept, and the diachronic concepts of grammation, regrammation, and degrammation replace the traditional 'cline'.

The main objective of my work is to explore the hypothesis that grammar consists of paradigms, each paradigm being composed of members expressing similar grammatical information, but with different specific grammatical features and limitations.

According to my hypothesis, lexical entities enter pre-existing or new paradigms when they grammaticalize. Therefore, grammatical paradigms are important for the understanding of the reanalyses leading to grammaticalization. Each grammatical paradigm can be identified through a set of defining features: it is a closed set of items, the number of members being fixed at a given language stage; it has a common *syntactic domain* and a common *semantic frame*; the choice between the members is obligatory in the sense that in the given syntagmatic context that defines the domain of the paradigm, speakers cannot avoid selecting one of the members; and it is asymmetric, distinguishing between marked and unmarked members. In order to verify the hypothesis and the argumentations presented above (which are the logical consequences of the hypothesis), exploration of data is necessary. Consequently, my dissertation is based on synchronic and diachronic investigations of electronic corpora.

In order to obtain coherence in my exploration, I have chosen to study the path of one single lexical unit to grammaticalization. The lexical input that I use to illustrate my point is the French verb *voir* 'to see' and the derived phrases, *voici* and *voilà*. *Voir* is a highly polysemous verb, characterized by its frequency in usage. Such high frequency verbs are likely to grammaticalize. The French verb *voir* is therefore very suitable to illustrate the

complexity of a series of processes, a complexity which can in principle apply to any lexical item in a broader linguistic perspective. Therefore, my dissertation aims to investigate and map the pathways of *voir* into a number of individual grammatical paradigms, and to identify the preceding reanalyses. Each paradigm illustrated in my study presents the synchronic results of diachronic grammaticalization processes, based on synchronic paradigmatic analyses of functions that seem to be very ambiguous and diverse. The paradigms comprise the following grammatical categories: verbal categories of tense, aspect, and mood, i.e. **progression** (*je le vois qui arrive* 'I see him <u>arriving</u>'), **voice** (*il se voit refuser l'accès* 'he is <u>refused</u> entrance); pragmatic categories such as **presentatives** (*voilà le bateau* '<u>here is</u> the boat'), **focus constructions** (*voici le bateau qui arrive* '<u>here is</u> the boat <u>arriving</u>'), and **discourse markers** (*le bateau arrive, tu vois* 'the boat is arriving, <u>in fact</u>'); and the category of particles, i.e. the **preposition** *vu* 'considering' and the **subordinate conjunction** *vu que* 'considering that'. By distinguishing the different contexts (labelled *syntactic domains*) in which the forms appear, and by stating which semantic fields they cover (labelled *frames*), synchronic paradigms (of which the above exemplified grammatical entities are members) are identified. This approach illustrates the relevance of paradigmatic conceptualization by describing a number of diverse grammatical paradigms into which one single verb enters, in order to point out the extensive span of grammatical diversity one lexical entity can convey.

In its entirety, the dissertation demonstrates that this innovative approach to grammar as sets of paradigms provides a precise and relatively simple presentation of what otherwise would seem to be utterly diverse usages of a lexical entity.