

Causality and causative constructions. Evidence from Modern Swedish.

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This paper draws on the major results as presented in Rawoens (2008) and addresses the topic of causality and of the linguistic expressions of causal relationships. More specifically, it zooms in on analytical causative constructions in Modern Swedish with a particular focus on the construction type which is realised by the causal predicates *få*, *komma*, *ha*, *förmå* and *låta* followed by an infinitival complement. This type of construction is illustrated by the following example featuring the causal predicate *få*:

Det höga kaffepriiset *får* allt fler brasilianska odlare att plantera mer kaffe. (Press95)
'The high coffee price makes more and more Brazilian growers plant more coffee.'

The assumption is that the different analytical causative constructions express different types of causation. Following a typology of possible causation types, the constructions mentioned are subjected to an empirical analysis which is corpus-based and based on elicitation data. The data are analyzed both quantitatively and qualitatively.

The quantitative analysis reveals that the verbs *få* and *låta* are the most frequent causal predicates in this construction type, whereas the verbs *komma*, *ha* and *förmå* obtain a relatively marginal status. It can also be observed that constructions with *låta* are distinct from the other constructions in a number of ways, both syntactically and semantically speaking.

The qualitative part of the study tries to account for the frequency discrepancies between the different causal predicates by analysing the semantic factors that determine the occurrence of one particular verb instead of another. The investigation starts from an analysis of the verbs and their nuclear arguments within the theoretical framework of functional grammar according to Dik (1997a, 1997b). An extension of Dik's functional model is elaborated to describe the semantic properties of the main participants in these constructions and the aktionsarter of the verbs involved.

The results of the analysis reveal a number of syntactic, semantic and pragmatic differences between the different causative constructions that are responsible for the actual choice of one causal predicate over another in a particular context. Furthermore, it is shown that the different analytical causative constructions in Swedish indeed express different types of causation, such as indirect causation and involuntary causation.

References:

- Dik, Simon C. 1997a. *The Theory of Functional Grammar, Part I: The Structure of the Clause*. Edited by Kees Hengeveld. Berlin: Mouton de Gruyter.
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