

How may DCxG be applied to analyzing codeswitching between Swedish and Finnish?

This talk discusses whether Diasystematic Construction Grammar (DCxG) could be used as a tool for identifying patterns in codeswitching between spoken Swedish and Finnish. Even though Swedish and Finnish are typologically dissimilar, multilingual speakers of these languages tend to find adequate strategies for alternating effortlessly between them – both lexically and syntactically – in their everyday language use. The alternation largely adheres to the grammatical structures of both languages, which is exemplified in (1), where the Swedish preposition phrase *på havet* (‘at sea’) is integrated into a Finnish syntactic pattern.

- (1) no siitä asti kun sai kännykkää alkaa kuljettaa oh *på havet*
‘well from the moment when you were allowed to bring your phone uh *at sea*’

Another example of integration is Swedish nouns unified in Finnish nominal phrases, taking on the same morphosyntactic function as a Finnish noun. This can be seen in the following example:

- (2) se oli ollut yhdessä *uppdateringissa*
it had been one update-<SWE>I EPENT<FIN>ON CASE:INE<FIN>
‘it had been on one update’

These morphosyntactic patterns in codeswitching align well with the assumptions made in DCxG about language and multilingual language use. DCxG assumes that the language system of multilingual speakers is an integrated network, known as a *multilingual construction*, which comprises both language-specific and language-unspecific constructions (Höder 2018). However, to analyze codeswitching within DCxG following questions are posed: Are diaconstructions also formed across languages without a close genetic relationship? Which processes are at work when constructions from different languages are combined in a single utterance? Is a diaconstruction a prerequisite for a codeswitching pattern, and if so, by what means and to what degree?

Because the transcription and annotation of the data are still ongoing, only preliminary results will be presented to demonstrate and discuss the theoretical framework.

References

- Höder, Steffen (2018). Grammar is community-specific. Background and basic concepts of Diasystematic Construction Grammar. I: Hans C Boas & Steffen Höder (Eds.): *Constructions in contact. Constructional perspectives on contact phenomena in Germanic languages*. Amsterdam/Philadelphia: Benjamins. pp. 37–70.