

The constructional behaviour of ditransitive verbs in Finland Swedish – an archaism or a case of pro-diasystematic change?

Diasystematic Construction Grammar (DCxG) has emerged as a fruitful framework for understanding how constructions are structurally ordered in the minds of multilingual speakers. Since language contact is often one of the driving forces behind language change, DCxG also provides important insights into the cognitive mechanisms of language change in a multilingual environment. Höder (2018:59–62) illustrates this by showing how a construction spreads from one language to another by becoming unspecified for language within a multilingual community in which both languages are spoken. However, language contact can cause language change also in largely monolingual communities that border on communities speaking a different language, as shown in Östman's (2018) account of passive constructions in the Solv dialect of Finland Swedish, which resemble passive constructions in Finnish.

Language contact between Finland Swedish and Finnish is a complex matter, as the level of bilingualism at both the individual level and the level of the community has varied substantially between different time periods and different regions (see Kuvaja 2019). I will present hypotheses and preliminary results from an ongoing research project on diachronic change in the use of ditransitive verbs in Sweden Swedish and Finland Swedish. In Finland Swedish, ditransitive verbs more frequently occur with the preposition *åt* (*ge ngt åt ngn* 'give sth. to sb.>') than in Sweden Swedish (Silén 2008). This trait could be an archaism or the result of contact with Finnish. In the latter case, *åt* would correspond to Finnish allative case, potentially forming a diaconstruction (cf. Höder 2018). I will discuss what kinds of results would indicate that language contact has affected the use of ditransitive verbs in Finland Swedish. Additionally, I will discuss how DCxG can be applied to the study of language contact in a situation where the multilingual status of the communities involved is somewhat unclear.

References

- Höder, Steffen 2018. Grammar is community-specific: Background and basic concepts of Diasystematic Construction Grammar. In: H. C. Boas & S. Höder (eds), *Constructions in Contact: Constructional Perspectives on Contact Phenomena in Germanic Languages*. Amsterdam: John Benjamins. Pp. 37–70.
- Kuvaja, Christer 2019. Språkkontakt och tvåspråkighet i 1700- och 1800-talens Finland. In: M. Tandefeldt (ed.), *Finländsk svenska från medeltid till 1860*. Helsingfors: Svenska litteratursällskapet i Finland. Pp. 317–354.
- Östman, Jan-Ola 2018. Constructions as cross-linguistic generalizations over instances: Passive patterns in contact. In: H. C. Boas & S. Höder (eds), *Constructions in Contact: Constructional Perspectives on Contact Phenomena in Germanic Languages*. Amsterdam: John Benjamins. Pp. 181–210.
- Silén, Beatrice 2008. Konstruktionsval vid verbet *ge* i finlandssvenskt och sverigesvenskt tal-språk. *Språk och stil*. N.F. 18. Pp. 112–142.