

Ditransitive constructions in Germanic languages:

Diachronic and synchronic aspects

Organisers:

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Introduction

Ditransitives

- 3 syntactic arguments/ semantic roles (agent, **recipient**, **theme**)
- verbs of transfer (and related classes)
- alternation between nominal (a) and prepositional (b) pattern
- typically but not necessarily correlated with word order (see Dutch b)

English:

- a. The man sent **his brother a book**.
- b. The man sent **a book to his brother**.

German:

- a. Der Mann schickte **seinem Bruder ein Buch**.
- b. Der Mann schickte **ein Buch (zu) seinem Bruder**.

Dutch:

- a. De man heeft **zijn broer een boek** gestuurd.
- b. De man heeft **een boek aan zijn broer** gestuurd/
De man heeft **aan zijn broer een boek** gestuurd.

Previous approaches

(English) ‘dative alternation’

- most extensively researched syntactic alternation
- across different theoretical approaches
 - Generative grammar
(e.g. Fillmore 1965; Green 1974; Larson 1988; Baker 1978; Ouhalla 1994)
 - Lexicalist approaches (e.g. Pinker 1989; Rappaport Hovav & Levin 2008)
 - Functionalist approaches (e.g. Dik 1997)
 - Usage-based approaches (e.g. Mukherjee 2005)
 - Cognitive Linguistics (e.g. Langacker 1999, 2000)
 - Construction Grammar (e.g. Goldberg 1995; Croft 2003; Perek 2015)
 - ...

Previous approaches

(English) 'dative alternation'

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- across different theoretical approaches
- across different fields
 - **Language acquisition; psycho-/neurolinguistics studies**
(e.g. Bock 1986; Gropen et al. 1989; Bock & Loebell 1990; Bock et al. 1992; Campbell & Tomasello 2001; Goldberg 2006)
 - **Language variation and change**
 - Dialectology (e.g. Hollmann & Siewierska 2007; Gerwin 2013, 2014)
 - World Englishes
(e.g. Bresnan & Hay 2008; Bernaisch et al. 2014; Röthlisberger et al. 2017)
 - Diachronic development
(e.g. Coleman & De Clerck 2011; Wolk et al. 2013; De Cuypere 2015; Zehentner 2016)

Previous approaches

(English) 'dative alternation'

- most extensively researched syntactic alternation
- across different theoretical approaches
- across different fields
 - Language acquisition; psycho-/neurolinguistics studies
 - Language variation and change
- **across different languages**
 - individual languages
(e.g. Barðdal 2008; Coleman 2009; contributions in Malchukov et al. 2010; Adler 2012)
 - typological studies
(e.g. Haspelmath 2004, 2005; Barðdal 2007; Bickel 2007; Margetts & Austin 2007; Barðdal et al. 2011; Malchukov et al. 2010)

Previous research: synchronic aspects

- **syntactic relationship: one form derived from other?**
(e.g. Ouhalla 1994; Culicover 1997)
- **semantic relationship: two forms, two meanings?**
(focus on subtle semantic differences between patterns)
(e.g. Goldberg 1995, 2006; Levin & Rappaport Hovav 2005; Langacker 2008)
- **semantic relationship: two forms, one meaning (more or less)?**
(quasi-synonymous, focus on language-internal and -external factors influencing choice of one pattern over the other)
(e.g. Bresnan & Hay 2008, Wolk et al. 2014)

Previous research: diachronic aspects

- **changes in the range of available patterns:**
rise of prepositional patterns; emergence of alternation
→ **co-existence of different patterns, complementary distribution**
- **changes in constituent order:**
fixation of word order; emergence of canonical orders (& changes in the factors influencing orders?)
- **changes in features of objects involved:**
loss of morphological case marking
- **changes in range of verb classes associated with patterns:**
move towards basic transfer-meaning; loss (and addition?) of specific verb classes
- **interaction between changes; role of external factors; ...**

Previous research: typology

West-Germanic languages

- ***Dutch***
e.g. Geeraerts (1998); Van Langendonck (2000); Coleman (2009, 2010); Coleman & De Clerck (2009); Coleman et al. (2010)
- ***Afrikaans***
e.g. De Stadler (1996); Coleman (forthc.)
- ***German***
e.g. Sabel (2002); Røreng (2011); Speyer (2011); Adler (2012)

North-Germanic languages

e.g. Reinhammar (1973); Jónsson (2000); Maling (2002); Barðdal (2007, 2008); Barðdal et al. (2011)

DinG workshop SLE 2017

Why focus on ditransitives in Germanic languages ?

- surprisingly similar developments, but at the same time interesting differences: comparison potentially allows us to draw conclusions about historical causality, cognitive factors at play, etc.
- relatively little comparative work so far
- abundance of previous studies on English ditransitives provides good basis for further work
- ...

DinG workshop SLE 2017

What about...

- ...the cross-linguistic pervasiveness of ditransitive constructions/ alternation (synchronic/diachronic)?
- ...the variability of factors shaping variation between nominal and prepositional patterns?
- ...the cognitive reality of these probabilistic factors?



Research questions

- Impact of **language-external factors** (e.g. time, register, region) on choice between nominal/ prepositional patterns as well as ordering of constituents, i.e. objects? Similar patterns of variation in different Germanic languages?
- **Diachronic development:** similarities/ differences between Germanic languages and possible explanations for these? role of language contact and more general changes (e.g. loss of case marking)? Possibility of reconstructing ditransitive patterns (and their formal/functional features) in earlier stages?
- **Cognitive and language-internal explanations** for regional/ historical differences in ditransitives? Effect of psycho-/ neurolinguistic processes (e.g. priming) on language acquisition and use of ditransitives?
- **Cognitive representation** of ditransitives (and alternation relationships): cross-linguistically robust?

Research questions

- Impact of **language-external factors** (e.g. time, register, region) on choice between nominal/ prepositional patterns as well as ordering of constituents, i.e. objects? Similar patterns of lectal variation in different Germanic languages?
 - Gerwin: Dialectal ditransitive patterns in British English
 - De Vaere et al.: The ditransitive alternation in present-day German: A corpus-based investigation of *geben*

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 - Barðdal & Vázquez-González: Reconstructing the ditransitive for PGmc.
 - Valdeson: Semantic shifts in Swedish ditransitives
 - Rauth: Ditransitive constructions in the history of German
 - Sówka-Pietraszewska: Syntactic realization of the arguments of possession change verbs in early English
 - Ingham: The Middle English prepositional dative. Grammaticalisation and contact with French

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 - Kholodova et al.: Ditransitive syntactic priming in a biased language: Investigating abstract representations over development

Schedule I

09:30-09:55	Jóhanna Barðdal & Juan G. Vázquez-González Reconstructing the Ditransitive construction for Proto-Germanic
POSTER SESSION	
11:30-11:55	Fredrik Valdeson Semantic shifts in the Swedish ditransitive construction
12:00-12:25	Philipp Rauth Object alignment in ditransitive constructions in the history of German
12:30-13:00	Katarzyna Sówka-Pietraszewska Syntactic realization of the arguments of possession change verbs in early English
LUNCH BREAK	

Schedule II

14:30-14:55	Richard Ingham The Middle English prepositional dative: grammaticalisation and contact with French
15:00-15:25	Johanna Gerwin Dialectal ditransitive patterns in British English
15:30-15:55	Hilde de Vaere, Ludovic de Cuypere & Klaas Willems The ditransitive alternation in present-day German: A corpus-based investigation of <i>geben</i>
COFFEE BREAK	
16:30-16:55	Alina Kholodova, Michelle Peter, Caroline Rowland, Shanley Allen Ditransitive syntactic priming in a biased language: Investigating abstract representations over development
17:00-17:25	Discussion and Round off

Edited volume (WiP)

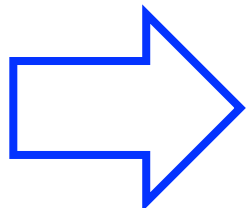
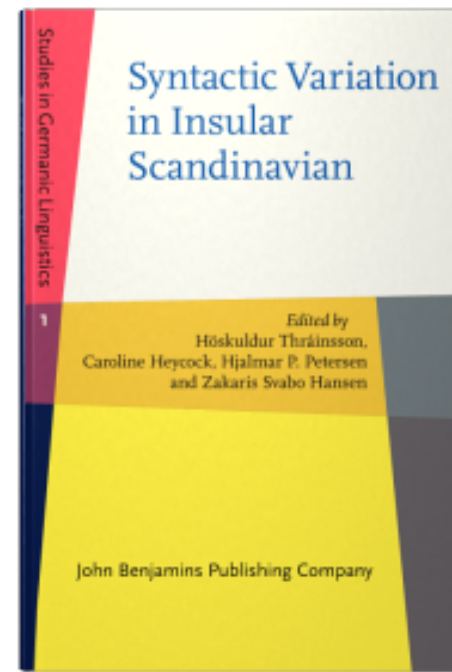
Studies in Germanic Linguistics (SiGL)

Editors:

Michael P. Putnam; B. Richard Page;
Laura C. Smith

Tentative timeframe:

- January 2018:
submission first versions
- August/September 2018:
submission revised (final) versions



Want to contribute? Let us know!
(by September 17)

Enjoy the workshop!

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