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Semantisch-pragmatische Kategorisierung der Kausalität im Deutschen und Englischen

Semantic and pragmatic categorization of causality in German and English

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Semantic and pragmatic categorisation of causality in German and English

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Focus points

- Aim
- Methodology
- Etymology of conjunctions in German and English
- Cataphoric markers of causality in German and English
- Prototypical effects
- Conclusions

Aim

- Category of Causality and its Typology in different languages
- Categorisation parameters of causality in German and English and their relation to text coherence

Existing research on the problem

- Causality from the point of view of argumentation (van Dijk 1980; Sweetser 1996; Schirjajev 1986; Vassiljev 1992 et al., van Eemeren/Houtlosser/Snoeck Henkemans 2007)
- Parameters, which define the meaning and usage of connectives in different languages (Sanders, Sweetser 2009: 3f.f.)
- Subjectivity, perspectivity, mental spaces

Existing research on the problem

- Means projecting causality in German (Kostrova 1992)
- Different degree of emotionality in German and Russian (Kostrova 2014)

Methodology

- Theory of mental spaces (Fauconnier 1994: 16)
- Integrative approach :

1) Semantic with reference to real world;
2) Epistemic with refernce to speaker‘s subjectivity;
3) Pragmatic with reference to speech acts (Sweetser 1990).

Extended by

- Etymological analysis of German and English conjunctions.
- Pragmatic factors: not only speech acts, but also communicative spheres.
- Prototypical effects.

Step by step methodology

- Continuation of the previous research of causality in German (Kostrova 1992);
- Comparison of etymology;
- Defining the cataphoric markers of causality in German and English;
- Comparison of usage;
- Comparison of prototypical effects.

Material

- In German:
- Direct communication: two corpora of the spoken language, our own corpus (direct speech);
- Distant communication: scientific functional style;
- The total number of examples: circa 1 thousand.

Material

- In English:

Preliminary analysis of the English corpora, dramas and scientific texts;

- The total number of examples: circa 100.

Etymology

- **weil** < die Weile

From temporal to subjective and metaphoric meaning (Sweetser 2009:9)

Postposition in compound sentence (90%)

Fast development : weil:

Intensified emotionality

- **because** < causa

Direct meaning

Pre- or postposition in compound sentence

Etymology

- **da** < temporal adverb < local adverb
- Anaphoric function
- *Preposition*

- **since** < temporal conjunction < temporal preposition
- Epistemic meaning
- *Pre- or postposition*

Conclusion

- Different etymological memory in German and English;
- Different typology of causality in German and English.

Cataphoric markers of causality

- A new notion: cataphoric markers of causality are speech units, which cover the causality and require motivated continuation or motivated conclusion.
- This notion allows to explain causality without any connectives.

Cataphoric markers of causality: an overview

- Negation;
- unusual quality;
- intended action;
- emotional state;
- order, request or necessity;
- Special, general or motivated question.

Negation

*Du…leistest dir nichts, **weil** du kein Geld hast →*

The existing mental space: It is proper to be always shopping .

Implied meaning: your not buying anything, to my mind is abnormal. The only explanation is that you have no money.

Implied advice: You should earn more.

*But in October 2006, when she could no longer work **because** she was sick, she lost both her job and her benefits. She applied for Medicaid but was rejected **because** she had earned too much earlier in the year. →*

The existing mental space: with social insurance you may expect only a certain sum.

Implied meaning : her having beeing refused is social norm.

She has received too much money this year.

Implied explanation: that was just.

Conclusion

- Different mental spaces of German and English speakers:
- The violation of the norm in German vs. accepting the norm in English;
- Implied advice in German vs. implied explanation in English.

Denoting some unusual quality

*Ich war nur leise, **weil** Julia schläft.* →

The mental space: When a man sleeps, you should not disturb him.

Implied meaning: my being silent was because Julia was asleep.

Direct assertive speech act.

*That title seemed clever to me back then but sly **because** the paper was really about types of small American businesses vanishing beneath the waves of insolvency.* →

The mental space : a small American business is helpless.

Implied meaning : The title is misleading.

The expression of doubt.

Conclusion

- In German :

Reference to the action

- In English:

Reference to the object

Intended action

*Er ging hinein, **weil** ihn der Bau faszinierte.* →

Implied represented speech

*Mr Punch was about to murder a crocodile with his big stick, **since** the reptile for some unknown reason had stolen his sausages.* →

Implied represented speech

The difference

- in English the reason is an instantaneous action and in German it is a continuous action

Denoting emotional state

Ich war auf Sven und Paula zornig, die mit ihrer Ehe nicht zurechtkamen →

The mental space: If the married couple aren't pleased with their marriage and show this, the others don't like this.

Implied meaning: I was furious about them, because they didn't cope with their marriage.

Indirect Motivation.

*We now have peace in our hearts, even **because** the Pope found time to meet us. →*

The mental space: Meeting the Pope can make the people have peace in their hearts.

Implied meaning: We had peace in our hearts, because the Pope found time to meet us.

Expression of satisfaction.

Difference in mental space

- In German the explanation is a continuous or repeated action and in English it is a singular action.

Denoting order, request or necessity

Pass mal ganz genau auf, weil das nämlich gar nicht leicht ist. →

The mental space: If something is not easy, one must pay attention.

Implied meaning: Because it isn't easy, you must pay attention.

Order.

Everyone needs to learn Standard English in the interest of efficient communication. ***That is why*** *in school we are taught to read and write it.* →

The mental space: Everyone must learn English in the global world.

Implied meaning: Since everyone must learn Standard English, we are taught reading and writing at school.

Assertive explanation

Special or general question

- *„Warum hast du dann nichts davon gesagt?"– „**Weil** das nun mal die Spielregeln waren"*

- *May I ask why?*

*- Well, **because** poetry has its own reward, actually – like virtue.*

Motivated question as implied marker of reproach

- *I can't think **why** you don't get a maid in.* →

Implied indirect speech act: reproach

Prototypical effects when expressing causality in German

- In the direct communication

the conjunction *weil* is prototypical:

90 % of all usage

- In scientific style

the conjunction *da* is prototypical:

Anaphoric function

Prototypical effects when expressing causality in English

- In the direct communication

the conjunction *because* is prototypical.

- In scientific style:

In objective speech the prototypical

conjunction is *because*.

In epistemic contexts the prototypical

conjunction is *since*.

Preliminary conclusion

- Categorisation parameters of causality:

cataphoric marking of c*ausality* depends on the speech r*egister*, which creates prototypical effects;

etymological memory and degree of emotionality and indirectness, which make up mental spaces.

Further outlook

- Analysing prototypical effects of cataphorical markers of causality, which are special in different languages.

- Thank you

for your attention!