

Abstract

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This thesis deals with the relations between coordination and word order in the history of Swedish. Up until the 18th century, the restrictions on word order in the second conjunct of a coordinate structure were less strict than they are in the modern language. In present-day Swedish, the finite verb always raises to C° in main clause coordination, whereas it always remains in situ (in VP) in subordinate clause coordination. In older Swedish, either verbal position was possible in both cases. In addition, VS-word order was used in contexts where it would be ungrammatical today.

Subordinate conjuncts with V in C°, main clause conjuncts with V in V°, and VS-conjuncts are all analysed as parts of coordination, in which only the first conjunct contains a trace after an extracted element; this type of trace-asymmetry characterizes a wide range of coordinate structures in older Swedish. In modern Swedish, on the other hand, a trace in a first conjunct is always matched with equivalent traces in all subsequent conjuncts (the traces occur across-the-board).

As from the middle of the 18th century, children no longer acquired a grammar permitting trace-asymmetries in coordination. The critical reduction of clues to the older system seems to have been promoted by – and might even have originated from – the normative linguists of the time.

Key words: across-the-board; coordination; (Early Modern) Swedish; language standardization; syntactic change; verb second; word order.

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