

TITLE: Sentence Adverbials, Constituent Order and Information Dynamics in Swedish

SWEDISH TITLE: Satsadverbial, ledföljd och informationsdynamik i svenskan

LANGUAGE: Swedish (English summary)

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## Abstract

The first aim of this thesis is to investigate causes behind constituent order variation in Swedish main clauses. The second aim is to explore pragmatic and distributional differences between sentence adverbials and other adverbials in relation to subjects and objects, in order to contribute to the description of sentence adverbials. The investigation consists of an empirical corpus study of one day's edition of the daily newspaper *Göteborgs-Posten* and extracts from 17 recent novels. From this corpus all clauses with a possibility of word order variation have been excerpted and examined in detail with respect to constituent order.

The corpus study shows that much of the word order variation in the investigated area of the clause is due to the information dynamics of the sentence. Constituents that express GROUND material usually precede constituents that express the RHEME. A third type of information status is distinguished, SCENE. This information status relates the proposition to a temporal, spatial or circumstantial context. SCENE material turns out to be regularly placed between ground and rheme, giving the overall pattern: GROUND < SCENE < RHEME.

There are, however, other factors which override this pattern whenever they are present in the clause. Structural factors, such as the verb second constraint, as well as semantic scope, marking of contrasted elements and the preservation of the functional hierarchy are more dominant than the information dynamics of the clause.

Sentence adverbials are distinguished from the other adverbial categories in the corpus by their function as information dynamic operators. As such, they often mark a contrasted portion of the clause and are aligned to a focus domain.

The analysis is carried out in the theoretical framework of Lexical-Functional Grammar combined with Optimality Theory. The various relevant factors and structural patterns are formalised as violable constraints which are ranked. It turns out that in Swedish, constraints that correspond to structural factors are ranked higher than semantic/pragmatic constraints.

KEY WORDS: Sentence adverbials, information dynamics, word order, constituent order, Swedish, information structure, Lexical-Functional Grammar, Optimality Theory

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