

Göteborgsstudier i nordisk språkvetenskap 23

Modala hjälpverb i språkhistorisk belysning

(English Summary)

av Marika Lagervall

Akademisk avhandling för filosofie doktorsexamen i nordiska språk, som med tillstånd av humanistiska fakultetens dekan kommer att försvaras offentligt lördagen den 20 september 2014 kl. 10.15 i Lilla hörsalen, Humanisten.



GÖTEBORGS UNIVERSITET

TITLE: Modal auxiliaries from a diachronic perspective.
SWEDISH TITLE: Modala hjälpverb i språkhistorisk belysning.
LANGUAGE: Swedish (English summary)
AUTHOR: Marika Lagervall

Abstract

In this thesis, the syntactic and morphological characteristics of modal verbs in Swedish have been investigated in order to identify and examine the changes these verbs have undergone. The survey was conducted as a quantitative comparative study in corpus-based materials from both medieval and contemporary Swedish texts. The results show that some of the characteristic properties of modal verbs are connected to the origin of the verbs and to different language changes, e.g. that the verbs occur without the infinitive marker, while others are related to their development into more typical auxiliary verbs, i.e. losing their ability to be used independently.

In order to define the category of modal verbs, a combination of several criteria is required. The weighting of the criteria is important, as is to which extent a verb must fulfill a criterion in order to count as a modal verb. The results also show that the verbs evolve towards being more and more grammatical words. In this grammaticalization process, some of the changes apply to all verbs and are therefore predictable, whereas others apply only to certain verbs.

A comparison with modal verbs in other Germanic languages shows many similarities, which follow from their common origin in a Germanic inflection category called preterite-present verbs. The modal verbs have undergone similar changes in the different languages, but at different rates. In addition the verbs have, in varying degrees, been affected by other language changes.

KEYWORDS: Modal verbs, auxiliaries, modality, preterite-present verbs, Germanic languages, infinitive marker, language change, grammaticalization, Swedish.

© Marika Lagervall

DISTRIBUTION: Institutionen för svenska språket
Box 200
405 30 Göteborg

OMSLAGSBILD: Richard Bergh, Nordisk sommarkväll (1899-1900). Göteborgs konstmuseum.

FOTO PORTRÄTT: Kenneth Eriksson

ISSN: 1652-3105

ISBN: 978-91-87850-54-7

LÄNK TILL E-PUBLICERING: <http://hdl.handle.net/2077/36007>

SÄTTNING: Björn-Eric Abrahamsson

TRYCKNING: Repro Lorensberg, Göteborgs universitet