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Det-konstruktioner i bruk

En systemisk-funktionell analys av satser med
icke-referentiellt *det* i modern svenska

(English Summary)

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SWEDISH TITLE: *Det*-konstruktioner i bruk. En systemisk-funktionell analys av satser med icke-referentiellt *det* i modern svenska

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Abstract

The aim of this thesis is to map out functions of modern Swedish *det*-constructions, i.e. different clausal patterns including the non-referential third person pronoun *det*, for example, *det är kul att spela tennis* ('it's fun to play tennis'), *det fläktade en skön vind från sjön* ('there was a nice wind blowing from the lake') and *det är mysigt med blommor och växter i hemmet* ('it's cosy with flowers and plants at home'). The research questions concern how the world is semantically represented, how assessment can be expressed and how non-referential *det* is distributed in comparison to referential *det*. The study uses corpus data consisting of sentences with *det* in texts from news reports, personal blogs and academic works. The analytical perspective derives from Systemic Functional Grammar, focusing on the *ideational* and *interpersonal metafunction*. Basic concepts used from the theory are *process*, *modality* and *modal assessment*.

The results show that non-referential *det* has approximately the same frequency as referential *det* in all three investigated text types, and that referential *det* sometimes has a wide and less clear kind of reference. Most of the *det*-constructions operate as a relational process where the first participant may be either implicit or construed as a medium as the process is non-agentive. However, passive *det*-constructions differ considerably from active ones as the process implicates an agent to a much higher degree – yet without expressing the agent role. Furthermore, the process of the passive *det*-construction is not relational but mental, verbal or material.

The results also show that *det*-constructions can be used as a modal resource expressing several types of modality and modal assessment. This interpersonal grammar is regularly construed metaphorically by a relational clause as a semantically extending alternative to an adjunct or finite construction. However, some *det*-constructions are used as a modal resource which is considered not metaphorical, as they do not have the adjunct/finite alternative. In addition, the borderline between metaphor and non-metaphor regarding the constructions is investigated and discussed.

By adopting a systemic-functional perspective on Swedish *det*-constructions, this study not only contributes a deeper understanding of the functions, but also increases the description of the Swedish language in systemic-functional terms, thereby developing the theoretical application.

KEYWORDS: non-referential *det*, *det*-constructions, impersonal constructions, existential constructions, Swedish, systemic-functional grammar, modality, modal assessment, semantics.

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