Constructions in contrast

Approaching Swedish correspondents to the entries in the Berkeley FrameNet Constructicon

Linnéa Bäckström, Benjamin Lyngfelt & Emma Sköldberg
Dept. of Swedish, University of Gothenburg

in collaboration with Lars Borin, Markus Forsberg, Leif-Jöran Olsson, Julia Prentice, Rudolf Rydstedt, Sofia Tingsell & Jonatan Uppström

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Outline

1. SweCxn – a Swedish constructicon
2. Borrowing from the Berkeley Cxn to Swedish
3. Comparison between BCxn and SweCxn entries
4. Relating constructions across languages
SweCxn – a Swedish Constructicon

- a large-scale (eventually), freely available electronic resource for linguistic purposes and language technology applications in the first place
- adaptation to educational uses in a longer perspective
- special concern for L2 acquisition
- methods for automatic identification of cx
- addition to the Swedish FrameNet and integrated with other resources at Språkbanken (the Language Bank) in Gothenburg
- simple format: dictionary type definition + structural sketch
- also Cxn projects for English, Japanese, and Brazilian Portuguese
Borrowing from Berkeley

- BCxn: 50 full entries (plus 23 partial)
- Served as insipiration for corresponding SweCxn entries
  – cx definitions, annotated examples
- BCxn vs. SweCxn
  – 37 one-to-one correspondents
  – 5 cases where one BCxn entry → two SweCxn entries
  – 8 non-corresponding cases

(at least partial equivalence in both form and function/meaning required)
Relatively general grammatical patterns often similar

Gapping

Again, targets were set, times [ ] carefully recorded and fitness [ ] improved.

Återigen blev mål uppsatta, tider [ ] noggrant nedtecknade och hälsan [ ] förbättrad. (health-DEF)

With_absolute

With these events in mind, Naipaul wrote a novel.

Med dessa händelser i åtanke skrev Naipaul en roman.
Differences typically concern grammatical markers

**Location_in_calender_unit**

Mr Gorbachev first called for a Helsinki 2 summit *next year* in Rome *last week*.


**Rate_frequency**

Twice *a day*. Twice *an hour*.

Två gånger *om dagen*. Två gånger *i timmen*.

Two times *about day*-DEF. Two times *in hour*-DEF.
Differences typically concern grammatical markers

**Dimension_conjunction**

It measures *four feet long by three feet wide.*

Den är *fyra fot lång och tre fot bred.*

- It is four foot-SG long and three foot-SG wide

Den mäter *fyra gånger tre fot.*

- It measures four times three foot-SG

– Definiteness, agreement, number, relational expressions
Major differences typically in lexically specific, idiom-like cx

Ones_very_eyes

Their life's work was destroyed before their very eyes.

≠ Deras livsverk förstördes framför deras ögon.
   before their eyes

Deras livsverk förstördes (mitt) framför ögonen på dem.
   right before eyes-DEF on them
Major differences typically in lexically specific, idiom-like cx

Way.means

But Mum just *elbowed her way* past the two women.

Men mamma bara *armbågade sig* förbi de två kvinnorna.

Tagged_sentence.canonical

A little vino loosens the conversation, *does it not?*

Lite vin lättar upp samtalet, *eller hur?*

Little wine lightens up conversation-DEF, or how?
Towards cross-linguistic constructiography

In FrameNet, the core units – frames – are basically semantic categories

• frames fairly successfully applied across languages

• language-specific idiomaticity mainly in the lexical instantiations (and, to some extent, in annotated examples)

In a Cxn, the core units – cx – have both form and meaning/function, and are essentially language-specific

• quite a few Eng-Swe pairs satisfactory translation equivalents

• structural relations – especially differing grammatical markers – should be accounted for
Relating constructions across languages: four options

• Translation equivalents?

• Frames?

• General grammatical cx?

• Abstract representation format?

→ some sort of combination?

Requires collaboration between the various Cxn projects
Thank you for your attention!

<http://spraakbanken.gu.se/eng/resource/konstruktikon>