

## Running in the family: Patterns of complement insubordination in Germanic

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This paper provides a survey of insubordination patterns (as defined by Evans 2007) in five Germanic languages, viz. Dutch, German, English, Swedish and Danish. The analysis focuses on a type of insubordination that is productive in many Germanic languages, viz. insubordinate complement clauses, introduced by *dat* (Dutch), *dass* (German), *that* (English), *att* (Swedish) and *at* (Danish). From a descriptive perspective, we try to identify the full constructional range of complement insubordination in each language, and we compare this range across the five languages. From a theoretical perspective, we use these data to assess (i) the constructional status of insubordinate clauses, (ii) their development, and (iii) the boundaries of the concept, particularly with respect to 'discourse-structuring' uses.

In our survey, we identify different types of insubordination in terms of their basic semantics, and the way these meanings are encoded and delineated in each language. As predicted by Evans (2007), the relevant meanings fall within the broad domain of speaker attitude and speaker-interlocutor negotiation. We identify three basic domains in our data (see further in Verstraete *et al.* 2012): (i) deontic insubordination, as in (1), which encodes the speaker's commitment to the desirability of an event (further subdivided in terms of parameters like control, strength, knowledge status), (ii) evaluative insubordination, as in (2), which encodes the speaker's evaluation of an event (further subdivided in terms of parameters like expectedness and attitude), and (iii) discourse-structuring insubordination, as in (3), which encodes relations between discourse units. Each of these domains has a number of subtypes defined by specific encoding properties, like the availability of modal markers, scalar markers, aspectual markers, demonstratives etc.

- (1) *Dass ihm nur nicht schlecht dabei wird!* GERMAN  
COMP he.DAT PRT NEG bad DEM.PREP become.PRS  
'I just hope that doesn't make him feel sick.'
- (2) *At noget så katastrofalt kan ende så godt.* DANISH  
COMP something PRT catastrophic can.PRS end PRT well.  
'[I can't believe] that something so catastrophic can end so well.'
- (3) A: En in één keer gaat dat vliegtuig een vaart maken om de lucht in te komen. Nou ik  
denk wat gebeurt hier. Net een hele snelle lift he. DUTCH  
B: ggg. Ja.  
A: *Dat je zo omhoog gaat.*  
COMP you DEM up go.PRS  
'A: And all at once the plane speeds up to get into the air. I thought what's going on here.  
Just like a very fast elevator isn't it. B: Yes. A: When you go up like that.'

If we compare the availability of these constructions across the five languages, Dutch and German have the fullest range (see Verstraete *et al.* 2012 for Dutch, Panther & Thornburg 2011 for German), with several deontic types, several evaluative types and a discourse-structuring type. English has the most restricted range, with a semi-productive evaluative type, some archaic remnants of a deontic type, and no discourse-structuring uses. Swedish and Danish are in between these two extremes, with a number of productive evaluative types (see, for instance, Delsing 2010), some archaic remnants of a deontic type, and a large range of discourse-structuring types (see, for instance, Lindström & London 2008). Subtypes that correspond

across languages usually show some differences in more specific parameters, like polarity constraints or the availability of counterfactual interpretations.

We use the results of this analysis to address three theoretical questions. The first two questions concern the constructional status and the development of insubordinate complement clauses. We show that it is difficult to develop a schematic generalization for the different types in each language, in spite of their apparent formal similarity as complement structures. Together with the cross-linguistic differences, this points to separate developmental trajectories for each type, with a point of origin in different main-subordinate constructions (as proposed by Evans 2007), and different degrees of conventionalization for the resulting insubordinate constructions. In addition, the Scandinavian data also reveal the existence of formally intermediate types that use clause-initial markers derived from predicates. The third question concerns the boundaries of the concept of insubordination, specifically its suitability to deal with discourse-structuring uses (see also Mithun 2008). We argue that these uses lack the hallmarks of typical insubordinate constructions, viz. a radical break in both dependency and semantics when compared with standard subordinate uses. We suggest that there are other ways to deal with such constructions, like generalized dependencies for clause and discourse levels (e.g. Thompson 1985), and world-discourse polysemies (e.g. Sweetser 1990).

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