

Abstract

The purpose of this master's thesis is to define the productivity of the caused-motion construction and describe what syntactic and semantic constraints limit it. While some consideration is given to the possibilities of using the construction's arguments, the principal focus is on the study of the main verbs that occur in the construction. The verbs can come from a variety of different semantic classes because of the construction's polysemous character and the *coercion* process, which allows constructions to change verbs' meaning and valency structure. The major constraints on the productivity of constructions that were discussed in Goldberg (1995), Suttle & Goldberg (2011) and Robenalt & Goldberg (2015) are *the semantic coherence principle*, *the correspondence principle*, similarity to attested verb classes, *coverage*, *statistical pre-emption* and *conservatism via entrenchment*. These, together with the semantic constraints imposed by the caused-motion construction's meaning, were the expected restrictions on the productive use of verbs in the construction. The analysed examples of the caused-motion construction come from the Spoken BNC2014 (Love et al., 2017) which can be considered representative of present-day spoken British English. The construction and corpus token frequencies of the main verbs occurring in the examples served as source data for the collexeme analysis (Stefanowitsch & Gries, 2003) which was used to calculate what verbs are strongly attracted to the construction, what verbs are only slightly attracted to the construction and what verbs are repelled by the construction. These types of verbs were sorted into semantic verb classes using Levin's (1993) classification in VerbNet (Kipper-Schuler, 2005). In addition, we distinguished whether the valency structure of the verb classes is compatible with the argument structure of the caused-motion construction or whether they are coerced or novel verbs. By analysing the possibilities of the occurrence of these types of verbs in the construction, we were able to ascertain the state of the productivity of the caused-motion construction and the syntactic and semantic constraints that restrict the productive use of verbs within it. We hope that that this analysis based on corpus data can serve as a theoretical background for experimental studies of the productivity of the caused-motion construction and the productivity of constructions in general.

Key words:

caused-motion construction, construction grammar, productivity, collostructional analysis, collexeme analysis, corpus linguistics, VerbNet