

Diasystematic because small? Germanic equivalents of the *because X* construction

The construction *because X* has been described (Bergs 2018; Bohmann 2016; Stöcker & Konvička 2019) for English (1), German (2), Dutch (3), Danish (4) and also reported to exist in other (neither all Germanic, nor related) languages (Konvička 2019: 167).

- (1) *But Iowa still wants to sell eggs to California, because money.*
- (2) *...dass ich auf Bildern mit meinem Freund sehr sehr glücklich aussehe, weil aah*
'...that I look very, very happy in the photos with my boyfriend, because aah'
- (3) *Dat is 9.5 uur!!! Op een zaterdag!!! Met extra mensen omdat lowlands!!!*
'that is 9.5 hours!!! on a Saturday!!! With extra people because Lowlands!!!'
- (4) *En fan med blognavnet Amen Fashion har mistet titlen, fordi Lady Gaga.*
'A fan with the blog name Amen Fashion has lost the name because Lady Gaga.'

The constructions in (1) to (4) show both formal and functional overlaps. Formally, they consist of a causal conjunction and a variable element *X* ranging from an adjectival, adverbial or a noun phrase to interjections or even emojis. Moreover, their development seems to follow the same path regardless of the specific language (Okada 2020; Stöcker & Konvička to appear).

One of the white spots in the research of *because X* is the relation of the constructions in all the different languages, particularly in languages other than English. Are the non-English constructions calques from English due to its dominant role on social media, where *because X* is frequently used? Or are they the results of independent, but parallel developments due to relatedness of the language? Or a combination of both? We do not have the answer yet.

This paper, however, proposes a framework in which the answer (whichever of the above it ultimately is) can be best found. Constructions of the type *because X* in the languages above, this paper argues, can be best analysed in terms of Höder's (2018) Diasystematic Construction Grammar. This approach allows us to model how the multilingual speakers of, for instance, English and Dutch generalise the language-specific constructions, identify their similarities (5a) and form an abstract, language-unspecific construction (5b) reflecting their multilingual reality.

- (5) a. [*because X* <C_{English}>] ↔ [*omdat/want* 'because' X <C_{Dutch}>]
b. [CAUSAL CONJUNCTION X <C_{unspecific}>]

This way we can model the constructions not as language-specific form-meaning mappings, but as community-specific and language-unspecific patterns.

References

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