

## Causation in discourse and cognition: Crosslinguistic perspectives

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Cognitive linguists have long recognized causation as a cognitive domain of fundamental importance to both the grammatical structure and the lexicons of natural languages (e.g., Croft 1991; Langacker 1991; Talmy 2000). This session brings together presentations of new research relevant to the crosslinguistic exploration of causality, in keeping with the crosslinguistic orientation of the overall conference theme. Five of the papers have an explicit typological focus; four more are implicitly comparative. Four draw on typological databases; the rest are based on primary data from languages such as Estonian, Japanese, Korean, Kupsapiny (Nilotic), Sidaama (Cushitic), Tagalog, and Yucatec Maya (only two of the papers focus on English). These papers deal with every aspect of the linguistic representation of causality, from agentivity and argument structure via multi-predicate and clause combination constructions to discourse coherence. Recurrent theoretical perspectives are Frame Semantics, Construction Grammar, and Grammaticalization Theory. Sources of evidence include elicitation, experimentation, corpus studies, statistical analysis of typological databases, and L1 and L2 acquisition studies. In the following, we identify four themes around which the contributions revolve.

**1. Causality in lexicon and discourse** – Four of the papers marshal tools from Frame Semantics (Bellingham; Latrouite and Van Valin) and/or Construction Grammar (De Knop and Gallez; Trigel and Tomson) to study the role of causality in event integration and coherence relations. A fifth investigates how lexical causatives can be automatically identified in discourse and discusses implications for language acquisition (You et al).

**2. Causality in grammar: Iconicity** – It has long been suggested that the morphosyntactic complexity of causatives iconically reflects the complexity of the causal chain involved (e.g., Haiman 1983). A recent target article by Haspelmath (2008) hypothesizes that such iconicity effects are entirely frequency-based, drawing responses by Croft (2008) and Haiman (2008). Two of the papers directly engage with this debate (Bohnemeyer; Levshina), while Kawachi et al present a rigorous quantitative test of Haiman's Iconicity Principle in response to Escamilla (2012).

**3. Causality in grammar: Lesser-studied causative constructions** – As compared to morphological and periphrastic causative constructions, other morphosyntactic expressions of causality have received less attention. Five of the presentations in our session focus on such devices. Three of them are typological studies (Gerasimov; Say; Zaika), while the fourth presents an in-depth examination of the syntax and semantics of an understudied English construction (Bellingham) and the fifth investigates how causatives, voice, and information structure interact with each other in Tagalog (Klimenko).

**4. Causal cognition across languages and cultures** – The relationship between cognition and linguistic structure is a fundamental issue in cognitive linguistics. Two of the presentations in our session examine how members of different linguistic and cultural communities attribute causality depending on the agentivity of the actors involved in the event (Ariño and Ibarretxe-Antuñano; Lin). The presentations focus on cross-cultural variation, but also lay the groundwork for future investigations of how relevant cultural differences impact the lexical and grammatical encoding of causal chains.

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