

Causation in Semantics and Grammatical Structure

Response questions for Week 7

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Due by: November 21, 2019

You can submit the response by email to `prerna.nadathur@phil.hhu.de`, hand it in in class next week, or turn in a paper copy to my mailbox in the Linguistics department office (24.53.00.86).

Assigned reading:

1. McKoon, G. & T. MacFarland. 2000. Externally and internally caused change of state verbs. *Language* 76, 833–858.
2. Wright, S. 2002. Transitivity and change of state verbs. In *Proceedings of the Berkeley Linguistics Society*, 339–350.

For this week's readings, you can focus on the corpus study in either of the two papers. In your essay, you should describe the corpus study and explain how it relates to the Levin & Rappaport Hovav paper from last week. You can use the following questions to help you structure your essay, but you don't need to respond to them directly.

1. How does the study relate to the internal/external causer hypothesis in Levin & Rappaport Hovav (1994)? In other words, what aspect of the hypothesis are the author(s) trying to examine?
2. What is the prediction that the internal/external causer hypothesis makes (that is, what should the study show if the hypothesis is correct)?
3. How do the author(s) test this hypothesis/what do they look for in the corpus data?
4. Do the data agree with the Levin & Rappaport Hovav hypothesis? Disagree? Simply refine the hypothesis or offer more information?
5. Do the author(s) think that the internal/external causation difference is something that linguistic meaning is sensitive to?

Note: the corpus study in McKoon & MacFarland is described in the first half of the paper. You should also read the rest of the paper, but you don't need to discuss it in your response unless you want to.