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Lexical class and perspectivization constraints on subsumption in the Lexical Constructional Model: the case of *say* verbs in English

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Abstract

This paper offers a principled account of the integration processes of Levin's (1993) say verbs into two constructions, the dative and the as construction. In the light of the Lexical Constructional Model (LCM) and taking Levin's (1993) original account of verb classes and alternations as a point of departure, we explore the principles that regulate such integration, which in the LCM is referred to as subsumption. These principles, which act as either licensing or blocking factors on this process, can be based upon conceptual compatibility between lexical and constructional structure or upon an alternative construal of the verbal predicate in order to adapt it to constructional requirements. Our study of this group of verbs in relation to the two constructions mentioned above has further allowed us to propose a robust sub-classification of them on the basis of more refined syntactico-semantic criteria.

Highlights

â–° We refine Levinâ€™s *say* verbs with the aid of the Lexical Constructional Model. â–° Our subclasses present different syntactic behavior. â–° We examine the subsumption of these verbs into the dative and the *as* construction. â–° We postulate a new constraint on subsumption: *Internal Variable Argument Enforcement*.



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Keywords

Subsumption; Internal constraints; External constraints; Lexical class; Construction; Cued inferencing

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