

The Grammar of Causation

The Grammar of Causation / International Conference



International Conference

Paris, University Paris - La Sorbonne,

23-24 October 2015

Conference organizers : Stéphane Viellard, Irina Thomières

©Kandinsky, W., *Moscow I*

The conference organizers would like to thank the CeLiSo for its generous financial support.

Keynote speakers :

Gaston GROSS (University of Paris XIII – Nord)

Igor MEL'ČUK (University of Montreal)

Jacques MOESCHLER (University of Geneva)

Robert ROUDET (University of Lyon III – Jean Moulin)

Daniel WEISS (University of Zürich)

Scientific committee : Christine Bracquenier (University of Lille), Martine Dalmas (University Paris – La Sorbonne), Pierre Frath (University of Reims Champagne-Ardenne), Gaston Gross (University of Paris XIII – Nord), Ferenc Kiefer (Academy of Sciences, Hungary), Michele Prandi (University of Genova), Wilfrid Rotgé (University Paris – La Sorbonne), Robert Roudet (University of Lyon III Jean Moulin), Elena Simonato (University of Lausanne), Paul-Louis Thomas (University Paris – La Sorbonne), Irina Thomières (University Paris – La Sorbonne), Stéphane Viellard (University Paris – La Sorbonne), Daniel Weiss (University of Zurich).

The conference will bring together scholars in a variety of languages on the subject of causation and the linguistic resources to express it.

The conference will address the following topics:

- the identification of causative verbs,
- simple causative verbs, including verbs of feeling, their arguments, their combinatory possibilities, the opposition 'causative verb - non causative verb',
 - the relationship between verbs and their casual adjuncts,
 - and, in the case of prepositional phrases, the relationships between preposition and noun (*de peur, par jalousie, de miedo, di amore, от счастья*, etc.). What role do analogy and diachronic mechanisms play in explaining the way languages function?
- verbal phrases, including those expressing feelings (*trembler de peur, rougir de honte, temblar de miedo, arrossire di vergogna, побелеть от гнева*, etc.). What is the explanatory value of the theory of prototypes? What other concepts such as intensity, polarity, etc. can help us describe these linguistic units?
 - similarities and differences between simple verbs and reflexive verbs (*attrister – s'attrister, взорвать – взорваться*),
 - causative verbs as mental operators and the expression of cause and effect between two events (*L'exposition de Picasso suscita l'intérêt du public. Torrential rain caused a major flood. Принятие нового закона привело к массовым забастовкам*). Is it possible to establish a typology of verbal operators ?
 - the distinction between 'agentive' cause and 'accidental cause'
 - in the case of predicative nouns, particular attention will be paid to compound nouns in which one element is the cause of the predicated action: *the noise of the engine, the smell of the sea, le bruit du moteur, l'odeur de la mer, l'odore delle rose, аромая чая*. Is a typology of these units possible? Why do compound nouns and simple nouns coexist and what are the prerequisites for the appearance, in a given context, of a simple predicate or a compound predicate? Which pragmatic criteria must be met to answer this question?
- the 'zero sign' of causation.

The linguistic encoding of causal relationships will be at the heart of the conference and it will lead us to discuss a number of essential questions:

- what does one express?
- how does one express it and in what respect are languages different?
- what is the role of subjectivity?
- lexical gaps: can one always express causation?

The conference working languages are French, English and Russian.

Conference fees : Academics 120 eur/ PhD candidates : 60 eur (to be confirmed)

Deadline for proposal submission: January 1, 2015 (please, send a 400 word abstract together with your name, title and institution).

Confirmation will be sent in by March 1, 2015.

Contact : colloquecause2015@inmano.com