

Propositional Constituent for Causal Complex Dominant Cause in English, Dutch, and German: Specifics and Similarity

N. Ye. Lemish

National Pedagogical University named after M.P. Dragomanov, Kyiv, Ukraine
E-mail: nataliyalemish@yandex.ru

Paper received 29.10.16; Accepted for publication 10.11.16.

Abstract. The paper under discussion deals with specifics and similarity of the propositional constituent for the causal complex dominant *cause* in English, Dutch and German. The definitions of *cause* from different dictionaries were analysed. The obtained results enabled determination of 81 causal sememes followed by the prototypes identification. It is argued that specifics of propositional constituent in the languages under study is due to different conceptual and language world pictures of different ethnoses, while similarity is explained by the common origin and interrelation of these languages.

Keywords: causal complex, propositional constituent, dominant, cause.

1. Introduction. Studying causality and everything that is related to it is always *topical*, for both objective and subjective reality can't exist without causal links. The more we understand the latter, the deeper in sense and more interesting life is.

The present paper outlines the further research results of the causal complex studying in different languages (see [9; 10; 11; 12]). Interpreting the causal complex (CC) as a mental construction with five semantic blocks (namely: *cause-effect*, *reason-conclusion*, *condition-result*, *concession-consequence*, *means-purpose*), the author considers *cause* to be the basic causal dominant. It was proved that in different languages CC can be realized by a set of various syntactic structures [11]. The correlation between mental-logic, semantic, and syntactic structures is rather disputable and complex being determined by the relation between deep and surface structures (postulated by N. Chomsky). In [12] it was grounded that the ideal unit to compare semantics and structure of a linguistic phenomenon (causality inclusive) is a syntactic concept possessing two planes: a plane of content expressed by a propositional constituent, and a plane of expression with structural schemes. Herewith a reader can find the results of studying the propositional constituent for the causal complex dominant *cause* in English, Dutch and German.

The linguistic material for the present paper has been analysed with the most popular and reliable *method* for studying semantic meanings of the words being structural one, namely the componential analysis [8; 15; 19; 23], the latter being disputable because of its procedure complexity and implicit variables [3; 6; 14]. It was chosen to derive causal sememes from the dictionary definitions of the basic causal dominant *cause* for all the languages under consideration to make further comparison with the *aim* to define the semantic proximity in the English, Dutch and German languages within one and the same domain of causality. A sememe is an ideal part of a sign, i.e. its contents. Any sememe is considered causal if it has at least 1 causal seme. There were also identified the prototypes of the propositional constituent for the causal complex dominant *cause* in all three languages on the basis of derived causal sememes recurrence. Further crosslinguistic contrasting has made it possible to determine the specifics and similarity of the causal world picture fragments depending upon different ethnic groups' mentality.

The dictionaries (5 for each studied language) included in this comparison (range from 1956-2012) [2; 4; 7; 13;

18; 20; 21; 22] as well as electronic ones [1; 5; 16; 17; 24; 25; 26], spanning about the current generation of users of English, Dutch and German. They include both thesaurus and comprehensive ones to get a wide variety of descriptions within the *cause* definitions.

In Chapter 2 the results of analysis of the causal complex dominant *cause* propositional constituent in the languages under study are presented followed by propositional constituent prototypes identification. Chapter 3 shows some general observations and conclusion.

2. Analysis of propositional constituent for the causal complex dominant cause in English, Dutch, and German. As it was mentioned above the propositional constituent of any causal complex dominant is formed by the causal sememes. The same is true for *cause*. The causal sememes for *cause* are derived from the definitions of 5 dictionaries for each language – 15 in total [1; 2; 4; 5; 7; 13; 16; 17; 18; 20; 21; 22; 24; 25; 26]. Every causal sememe is marked with an Arabic figure to enable the author to define common and differential types. If there is a slight difference in the semantic shade of the propositional constituent, then a small English letter is added to the Arabic figure to mark the variant of the causal sememe. Taking into account that causality can be of nominal and verbal nature, the verbs **TO BE** in English, **ZIJN** in Dutch and **SEIN** in German in causal sememes derived are given in bold. On removing the common causal sememes the differential ones are determined for each language. The recurrence of certain causal sememes serves as a basis for prototypes identification.

2.1. Causal sememes and prototypes for cause in English. For the causal complex dominant *cause* from the definitions in 5 English dictionaries [2; 7; 13; 18; 20] there are derived 39 causal sememes, as it follows.

9 causal sememes are derived from [20]:

- 1) SMTH **TO PRODUCE** SMTH ELSE (an effect) – 1;
- 2) SMB **TO OCCASION** SMTH (intentionally) – 2a;
- 3) SMB **TO OCCASION** SMTH (unintentionally) – 2b;
- 4) SMTH **TO MOVE** SMB TO DO SMTH ELSE – 3;
- 5) SMTH **TO BE** A GROUND FOR SMTH ELSE – 4a;
- 6) SMTH **TO BE** A REASON FOR SMTH ELSE – 5;
- 7) SMTH **TO BE** A MOTIVE OF SMTH ELSE – 6;
- 8) SMTH SMB **TO STRIVE** FOR (/SMTH TO BE THE PURPOSE OF SMB) – 7;
- 9) SMTH **TO BE** A DISEASE – 8.

4 causal sememes are derived from [18]:

- 1) SMTH TO BRING ABOUT SMTH ELSE (a result) – 9;
- 2) SMTH **TO BE** A BASIS FOR SMTH ELSE – 10;
- 3) SMTH **TO BE** GROUNDS FOR SMTH ELSE – 4b;
- 4) SMTH TO LEAD TO SMTH ELSE – 11.
5 causal sememes are derived from [7]:
 - 1) SMB TO MAKE SMTH HAPPEN – 12;
 - 2) SMTH TO MAKE SMTH ELSE HAPPEN – 13;
 - 3) SMTH **TO BE** A REASON FOR SMTH ELSE – 5;
 - 4) SMTH TO BE SUPPORTED BY SMB – 16;
 - 5) SMTH TO BE FOUGHT BY SMB – 17.
- 16 causal sememes are derived from [13]:
 - 1) SMB TO MAKE SMTH HAPPEN – 12;
 - 2) SMTH TO MAKE SMTH ELSE HAPPEN – 13;
 - 3) SMTH TO MAKE IT REASONABLE (for smb) TO DO – 14;
 - 4) SMTH TO BE SUPPORTED BY SMB – 16;
 - 5) SMTH TO BE FOUGHT FOR BY SMB – 17;
 - 6) SMTH **TO BE** A CAUSE OF SMTH ELSE – 15;
 - 7) SMTH **TO BE** RESPONSIBLE FOR SMTH ELSE – 18;
 - 8) SMB **TO BE** RESPONSIBLE FOR SMTH ELSE – 19;
 - 9) SMTH TO BRING ABOUT SMTH ELSE – 9;
 - 10) SMB TO BRING ABOUT SMTH ELSE – 21;
 - 11) SMTH TO RESULT IN SMTH ELSE – 22;
 - 12) SMTH TO LEAD TO SMTH ELSE – 11;
 - 13) SMB TO LEAD TO SMTH – 23;
 - 14) SMTH TO TRIGGER SMTH ELSE (suddenly) – 24;
 - 15) SMTH TO PRECIPITATE (/PROVOKE) SMTH ELSE – 25;
 - 16) SMB TO PRECIPITATE SMTH – 26.
5 causal sememes are derived from [2]:
 - 1) SMTH TO PRODUCE SMTH ELSE – 1;
 - 2) SMTH **TO BE** GROUNDS FOR SMTH ELSE (to act) – 4b;
 - 3) SMTH **TO BE** OF SMB'S INTEREST – 20;
 - 4) SMTH TO BE SUPPORTED BY SMB – 16;
 - 5) SMTH **TO BE** THE CAUSE OF SMTH ELSE – 15.

Thus, in total on the basis of the definitions for causal complex dominant *cause* in 5 English dictionaries there have been defined 39 causal sememes, 26 of which are differential. There have also been identified 11 prototypes (judging by the types recurrence): SMTH TO PRODUCE SMTH ELSE; SMB TO OCCASION SMTH; SMTH **TO BE** GROUNDS FOR SMTH ELSE; SMTH **TO BE** A REASON FOR SMTH; SMTH TO BRING ABOUT SMTH ELSE; SMB TO MAKE SMTH HAPPEN; SMTH TO MAKE SMTH ELSE HAPPEN; SMTH **TO BE** A CAUSE OF SMTH ELSE; SMTH TO LEAD TO SMTH ELSE; SMTH TO BE SUPPORTED BY SMB; SMTH TO BE FOUGHT BY SMB.

2.2. Causal sememes and prototypes for *oorzaak* in Dutch. For the causal complex dominant *oorzaak* from the definitions in 5 Dutch dictionaries [4; 17; 21; 24; 25] there are derived 22 causal sememes, as it follows.

- 4 causal sememes are derived from [4]:
- 1) IETS BRENGEN IETS ANDERS MET ZICH MEE / smth to bring about smth else (necessarily) – 9;
 - 2) IETS **ZIJN** AANLEIDING VAN IETS ANDERS / smth to be a stimulus for smth else – 27;

- 3) IETS VEROORZAKEN IETS ANDERS / smth to cause smth else – 28;
- 4) IETS **ZIJN** GROND TOT IETS ANDERS / smth to be a ground for smth else – 4.
2 causal sememes are derived from [17]:
 - 1) IETS **ZIJN** AANLEIDING VAN IETS ANDERS / smth to be a stimulus for smth else – 27
 - 2) IEMAND **ZIJN** OORSPRONG VAN IETS / smb to be a source for smth else – 29a
10 causal sememes are derived from [25]:
 - 1) IETS BEWEGEN IETS ANDERS (OM TE KOMEN TOT EEN RESULTAAT) / smth to move smth else (to achieve a result) – 30a;
 - 2) IETS **ZIJN** REDEN VOOR IETS ANDERS / smth to be a reason for smth else – 5;
 - 3) IETS **ZIJN** BEWEEGREDEN VOOR IETS ANDERS / smth to be a motive for smth else – 6;
 - 4) IETS GEVEN GELEGEHEID TOT IETS ANDERS / smth to make smth else possible – 31;
 - 5) IETS UITLOKKEN IETS ANDERS / smth to provoke smth else – 25;
 - 6) IETS VORMEN AANLEIDING TOT IETS ANDERS / smth to form a stimulus for smth else – 33;
 - 7) IETS BRENGEN IETS ANDERS MET ZICH MEE / smth to bring about smth else (necessarily) – 9;
 - 8) IEMAND (GOD) **ZIJN** OORZAAK VAN ALLES (DINGEN) / smb (God) to be the cause for all (things) – 34a;
 - 9) IEMAND (GOD) **ZIJN** OORZAAK VAN ALLES (MENSEN) / smb (God) to be the cause for all (people) – 34b;
 - 10) IEMAND (GOD) **ZIJN** OORZAAK VAN ALLES (DIEREN) / smb (God) to be the cause for all (animals) – 34c.
3 causal sememes are derived from [24]:
 - 1) IETS BRENGEN IETS ANDERS MET ZICH MEE / smth to bring about smth else (necessarily) – 9;
 - 2) IETS BEWEGEN IETS ANDERS / smth to move smth else – 30b;
 - 3) IEMAND (GOD) **ZIJN** OORSPRONG VAN ALLES / smb (God) to be the source for all – 29b.
3 causal sememes are derived from [21]:
 - 1) IETS BRENGEN IETS ANDERS MET ZICH MEE / smth to bring about smth else (necessarily) – 9;
 - 2) IETS **ZIJN** OORSPRONG VAN IETS ANDERS / smth to be a source for smth else – 32;
 - 3) IEMAND **ZIJN** OORSPRONG VAN IETS / smb to be a source for smth – 29a.

Thus, for *oorzaak* there are derived 22 causal sememes followed by identification of 13 differential types, and 5 prototypes: IETS BRENGEN IETS ANDERS MET ZICH MEE; IETS **ZIJN** AANLEIDING VAN IETS ANDERS; IEMAND (GOD) **ZIJN** OORZAAK VAN ALLES; IETS BEWEGEN IETS ANDERS; IEMAND **ZIJN** OORSPRONG VAN IETS.

2.3. Causal sememes and prototypes for *Ursache* in German. For the causal complex dominant *Ursache* from the definitions in 5 German dictionaries [1; 5; 16; 22; 26] there are derived 20 causal sememes, as it follows.

- 4 causal sememes are derived from [26]:
- 1) ETWAS BEWIRKEN ETWAS ANDERES / smth to cause smth else – 28a;

2) ETWAS VERANLASSEN ETWAS ANDERES / smth to bring about smth else – 9;

3) ETWAS **SEIN** (eigentlicher) ANLASS FÜR ETWAS ANDERES / smth to be a (actual) reason for smth else – 5;

4) ETWAS **SEIN** GRUND FÜR ETWAS ANDERES / smth to be grounds for smth else – 4a/b.

8 causal sememes are derived from [1]:

1) ETWAS **SEIN** EINE ENTSCHULDIGUNG FÜR ETWAS ANDERES / smth to be an excuse for smth else – 35;

2) ETWAS BEWIRKEN ETWAS ANDERES ZU **SEIN** / smth to cause smth else to exist – 28b;

3) ETWAS BEWIRKEN ETWAS ANDERES ZU GESCHEHEN / smth to cause smth else to happen – 28c;

4) ETWAS VERANLASSEN / HERVORBRINGEN ETWAS ANDERES / smth to bring about smth else – 9;

5) ETWAS MACHEN ETWAS ANDERES MÖGLICHES / smth to make smth else possible – 31;

6) ETWAS **SEIN** (wirkende) URSACHE FÜR ETWAS ANDERES / smth to be a (efficient) cause for smth else – 15;

7) ETWAS MACHEN JEMAND ZU TUN ETWAS ANDERES / smth to make smb act – 3;

8) ETWAS MACHEN JEMAND ZU LEIDEN / smth to make smb suffer – 36.

2 causal sememes are derived from [5]:

1) ETWAS **SEIN** (rechtmäßiger) GRUND FÜR ETWAS ANDERES / smth to be (legal) grounds for smth else – 4b;

2) ETWAS **SEIN** (eigentliche) BEGRÜNDUNG FÜR ETWAS ANDERES / smth to be (actual) justification for smth else – 37.

2 causal sememes are derived from [16]:

1) ETWAS BESTIMMEN ETWAS ANDERES / smth to determine smth else (existence) – 38a;

2) ETWAS BESTIMMEN ETWAS ANDERES / smth to determine smth else (creation) – 38b.

And 4 causal sememes are derived from [22]:

1) ETWAS **SEIN** GRUND FÜR ETWAS ANDERES / smth to be grounds for smth else – 4b;

2) ETWAS **SEIN** URSPRUNG FÜR ETWAS ANDERES / smth to be a source for smth else – 32;

3) ETWAS VERANLASSEN ETWAS ANDERES / smth to bring about smth else – 9;

4) JEMAND VERANLASSEN JEMAND ANDERS ZU ETWAS / smb to bring about smb else to smth – 39.

Thus, for *Ursache* there are derived 20 causal sememes. On eliminating the repeated sememes, 11 differential types are identified. On the basis of the sememes recurrence the author has defined 4 prototypes: ETWAS BEWIRKEN ETWAS ANDERES; ETWAS VERANLASSEN ETWAS ANDERES; ETWAS **SEIN** GRUND FÜR ETWAS ANDERES; ETWAS BESTIMMEN ETWAS ANDERES.

3. General observations and conclusion. In general within the frame of the paper proposed there have been derived and analysed 81 causal sememes for the causal dominant *cause* in English, Dutch and German. There have been defined 39 differential types of propositional constituent and different number of prototypes for each language under study, namely: 11 – for English, 5 – for Dutch and 4 – for German.

As soon as all 3 languages under consideration belong to one West Germanic group of the Indo-European language family, it was anticipated that they must have at least something in common. The hypothesis is proved with identification of the universal prototype of propositional constituent for the causal dominant *cause* for English, Dutch and German – SMTH TO BRING ABOUT SMTH ELSE. It is also noticed that there are 2 differential types common for all 3 languages (4 and 5), 6 is common for English and Dutch, 3 and 15 – for English and German, 28, 31 and 32 – for Dutch and German.

Thus the results of a crosslinguistic contrasting show that the propositional constituent of the causal dominant *cause* in English, Dutch and German is characterised both with specifics and similarity which can obviously be explained by the fact that certain similar prototypic types were formed in the period of the Indo-European proto-language. Specifics is due to further individual historical evolution of each language, their social structure, and cultural priorities. Being aware of causal prototypes varying from one language to another and their specific types gives a key to understanding the other ethnoses.

Further studying of the semantics of the other causal dominants in different languages and their comparing is considered as our future prospective in defining specifics in mentality of different ethnoses. It can facilitate both foreign languages teaching / learning and translation process.

REFERENCES

- Adelung J.Ch. Grammatisch-Kritisches Wörterbuch der Hochdeutschen Mundart [Electronic Resource]. Hildesheim – New York: Georg Olms Verlag, 1970. – Mode of Access : <http://www.woerterbuchnetz.de/Adelung?lemma=ursache>.
- Collins English Dictionary [6th ed.]. Glasgow : HarperCollins Publishers, 2011. 949 p.
- Common P. Independent component analysis – a new concept? // Signal Processing, 1994. Vol. 36. Issue 3. P. 287–314.
- Etymologisch woordenboek van het Nederlands : in 4 v. [onder hoofdredactie van dr. Marlies Philippa, dr. Frans Debrabandere, prof. dr. Arend Quak, dr. Tanneke Schoonheim en dr. Noline van der Sijts]. Amsterdam : Amsterdam University Press, 2003. Vol. I : A–E. — 725 p.; 2005.
- Grimm J., Grimm W. Deutsches Wörterbuch [Electronic Resource]. Quellenverzeichnis Leipzig, 1971. – Mode of Access : <http://www.woerterbuchnetz.de/DWB?lemma=ursache>.
- Honkela T., Hyvärinen A., Väyrynen J. Emergence of linguistic features: Independent component analysis of contexts // Modelling Language Cognition and Action: Proceedings of the NCPW9, Ninth Neural Computation and Psychology Workshop. New Jersey, 2005. P. 129–138.
- Hornby A. S. Oxford Advanced Learner's Dictionary of Current English. [7th ed.]. Oxford University Press, 2010. 1716 p.
- Kreidler Ch. Introducing English Semantics. New York: Routledge, 2002. P. 87.
- Lemish N. Causal Complex Dominant Semantics in English and Dutch : a Comparative Study // Australian Journal of Scientific Research. 2014. No. 2 (6). P. 656–663.
- Lemish N. Prototypical Verbal Types of Causality in Languages of Germanic, Romance and Slavic Groups // Issues on Contrastive Semantics (collection of scientific

- papers). Kyiv: KNLU, 2015. Is. 12. P. 244–252 (Леміш Н.С. Прототипні вергеральні типи каузальності у мовах германської, романської та слов'янської груп // Проблеми зіставної семантики : [зб. наук. ст.] / [відп. ред. А.В. Корольова]. К.: Вид. центр КНЛУ, 2015. Вип. 12. С. 244–252).
11. Lemish N. A Structural and Semantic Typology of the Causal Complex in English // Austrian Journal of Humanities and Social Sciences. Section 11. Philology and Linguistics. Vienna, 2014. № 7–8. P. 221–225. ("EastWest" Association for Advanced Studies and Higher Education, GmbH).
 12. Lemish N. Verteral Types of Causality in Related Languages. Zhytomyr: ZhDU named after I. Franko, 2015. 508 p. (Леміш Н.С. Вергеральні типи каузальності у споріднених мовах : [монографія] / Н.С. Леміш. Житомир : Вид-во ЖДУ ім. І. Франка, 2015. 508 с.).
 13. Longman Dictionary of Contemporary English. [5th ed.]. Pearson Education Ltd., 2012. 2082 p.
 14. Lund K., Burgess C., Atchley R. A. Semantic and associative priming in high-dimensional semantic space // Proceedings of the 17th Annual Conference of the Cognitive Science Society, 1995. P. 660–665.
 15. Lyons J. Linguistic semantics: An Introduction. Cambridge, England: Cambridge University Press, 1995. P. 108.
 16. Meyers Grosses Konversationslexikon [Electronic Resource]. [6th rew. ed.]. Leipzig & Wien, 1905–1909. Mode of Access : <http://www.woerterbuchnetz.de/Meyers?lemma=ursache>.
 17. Midden-Nederlands Woordenboek [Electronic Resource]. Mode of Access : http://nl.wikipedia.org/wiki/Middelnederlandsch_Woordenboek.
 18. New Webster's Dictionary and Thesaurus of the English Language / [ed. by Doris L. Lechner]. Danbury, CT : Lexicon Publications, Inc., 1993. XXXI, 1149 p., T 1–67.
 19. Nida E. Componential Analysis of Meaning. Belgium: Mouton, 1975. P. 54–66.
 20. The Shorter Oxford English Dictionary on Historical Principles / [prep. by William Little, H. W. Fowler, J. Coulson; rev. & ed. by C. T. Onions]. 3rd ed. rev. with addenda. Oxford at the Clarendon Press; Oxford University Press, 1956. 2515 p.
 21. Van Dale: Groot woordenboek der Nederlandse Taal : en 2 Dl. / [red. C. Kruyskamp]. 10-e dr. s-Gravenhage : Martinus Nijhoff, 1976. D. II : O–Z. 1655 p.
 22. Wahrig G. Deutsches Wörterbuch. Munchen : Bertelsmann Lexikon Verlag GmbH, 1991. P. 1346.
 23. Widyastuti S. Componential Analysis of Meaning : Theory and Applications // Journal of English and Education, 2010. № 4 (1). P. 116–128.
 24. Woordenboek der Friese Taal [Electronic Resource]. Access Mode : <http://gtb.inl.nl/>.
 25. Woordenboek der Nederlandse Taal [Electronic Resource]. Mode of Access : http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Woordenboek_der_Nederlandsche_Taal.
 26. Wörterbuch Duden online [Electronic Resource]. Mode of Access : <http://www.duden.de/node/691506/revisions/1297620/view>.

Пропозиционная составляющая доминанты каузального комплекса *причина* в английском, нидерландском и немецком языках: специфика и подобие

Н. Е. Леміш

Аннотация. В предложенной статье рассматривается специфика и подобие пропозиционной составляющей доминанты каузального комплекса *причина* в английском, нидерландском и немецком языках. На основе разных словарей были проанализированы дефиниции *причины*. Полученные результаты дали возможность выделить 81 каузальную семему с последующей идентификацией прототипов. Специфика пропозиционной составляющей в исследуемых языках объясняется отличием концептуальной и языковой картин мира разных этносов, а подобие – общим происхождением и взаимодействием этих языков.

Ключевые слова: каузальный комплекс, пропозиционная составляющая, доминанта, причина.