

Danish raising passives
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The Danish Reportive Passive (RP) is non-canonical in the sense that a referential subject of a passive verb is at no point an object (direct or indirect, thematic or non-thematic) of the verb. In the RP the subject of an embedded propositional complement is raised to subject.

- (1) a. De påstå-r, at han er hjemme
they claim-PRES.ACT that he is at home
b. han påstå-s at være hjemme
he claim-PRES.PASS to be at home

The RP is a kind of reportive evidential in the sense of (Aikhenvald, 2004). It indicates a (usually) unspecified information source for the proposition presented. The RP is formed of verbs taking finite sentential complements as their sole internal complement: utterance verbs and cognitive verbs of belief and expectation (reflective verbs, (Lødrup, 2008)).

The RP is well-known from languages also exhibiting Subject-to-Object-Raising (e.g. English) (a.o. Postal, 1974; Mair, 1990; Rooryck, 1997; Noël, 2003; Noël and Coleman, 2009), while it is generally absent in languages without SOR (e.g. German). Danish is special in having a (very) productive RP, but no SOR:

- (2) * De påstå-r ham at være hjemme
They claim-PRES.ACT him to be at home

In the talk I argue that the RP is indeed a passive and not a grammaticalized evidentiality-marker. Further I discuss why we find the RP in Danish and not in German and I provide an analysis of the RP in Danish within the framework of HPSG (Pollard and Sag, 1994; Müller, 2008).

References

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