On the perfect-evidential-link in Continental Scandinavian

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The goal of this paper is to analyse differences in inferential uses of the Swedish and English present perfect. When used in non-inferential contexts, both display the *present perfect puzzle* (cf. (1)), i.e. they cannot be combined with certain past adverbials (Klein 1992). In inferential contexts however, when used to indicate the author's degree of confidence in a present inference about past events, the *present perfect puzzle* only disappears in Swedish (cf. (2)) (Kinnander 1974).

Various proposals have been made to explain this cross-linguistic difference and so far, the puzzle has not been resolved yet. One of the basic problems is the judgement of the data itself. Rothstein (2008) claims that the inferential reading is only possible in the context of certain adverbial modifiers or other linguistic elements indicating evidentiality or inferentiality. Larsson (2009), however, states that the inferential reading of the Swedish present perfect is not due to context, but belongs to its semantics. This controversy on the data has an important impact on the analysis of the present perfect itself. If it turned out that the evidential meaning is part of the meaning of the present perfect, "traditional analyses" like the current-relevance- or result-state-approach, but also the classical version of the ExtendedNow would have to be modified. Interestingly, the discussion of the data is only corpus based: there are no experimental approaches to the Swedish inferential present perfect. In my talk, I will therefore discuss data from an experimental investigation where I also consider Norwegian and Danish.

(1)	a.	*Sigurd	har	kommit	igår	b. *Sigurd has come yesterday.
		Sigurd	has	come	yesterday	
(2)	a.	Sigurd	har	tydligen	kommit	igår	b. *Sigurd has probably come yesterday.
		Sigurd	has	probably	come	yesterday	

References

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