

Åke Viberg

What One Verb Can Do: The Swedish Verb *göra* in a Crosslinguistic Perspective

Abstract

This paper provides a short sketch of the Swedish verb *göra* ‘make, do’ from a crosslinguistic perspective comparing it in a preliminary way to its major translation equivalents in English, German, French and Finnish. As a lexical verb, *göra* serves as the nuclear verb among the verbs of production (*build, manufacture, write* etc). As a grammatical verb, *göra* fulfils two quite different functions and serves both as an analytic causative marker and as a pro-verb—a verbal parallel both to indefinite pronouns and to anaphoric pronouns. As a pro-verb it has a tendency to develop into a placeholder serving as a slot-filler in the Swedish word order system.

1. Introduction

As is well-known, languages like English and German have two verbs—*do* and *make* and *tun* and *machen*, respectively—where many other languages like Swedish have to make do with just one verb—*göra* in Swedish. The following study will present a brief contrastive sketch of the various meanings of *göra* and the semantic and syntactic frames it can appear in. The study is part of a study in progress called the typological lexical profile of Swedish (Viberg 1990, 2005, *forthc.*).

The present article will primarily be contrastive in perspective. Swedish will be compared with a selection of languages which are relatively closely related genetically and/or areally, whereas general typology with a world-wide scope provides the basic framework for the characterization. The comparison will be based on corpus-data which make it possible to provide a relatively fine-grained semantic analysis. In particular, data will be presented from two translation corpora. One is the English-Swedish Parallel Corpus (ESPC) prepared by Altenberg & Aijmer (2000), which contains original texts in English and Swedish together with their translations. The texts are divided into two broad genres: Fiction and

Non-fiction with several subcategories. The original texts in each language contain around 500,000 words. The other corpus is more limited and will be referred to as the Multilingual Pilot Corpus (MPC). It is being compiled by the author and consists at present of extracts from 10 novels in Swedish with translations into English, German, French and Finnish. The total number of words is around 250,000 in the Swedish originals.

In Table 1, examples are given of the most basic uses of *göra* from the Multilingual Pilot Corpus (MPC). The classification will be commented on in various sections below. Bold face and italics have been added by me to highlight corresponding elements in the original texts and their translations. Primarily, a combination of boldface and italics is used to mark the verb *göra* and its closest correspondents in the translated versions of the examples.

<i>Swedish</i>	<i>English</i>	<i>German</i>	<i>French</i>	<i>Finnish</i>
Production: NP + V + NP (av NP)				
Av Adams revben <i>gör</i> Gud Eva. PCJ	Then, out of Adam's rib, God makes Eve.	Aus Adams Rippe macht Gott Eva.	Ensuite il fait Eve avec une côte d'Adam.	Ja Aatamin kylkiluusta hän tekee Eevan.
Transformation: NP + V + NP + till NP				
Denna exakthet, som jag förut eftersträvade, hade gjort mig <i>till</i> urets fånge. POE	The precision I had striven for previously had made me prisoner of the clock.	Die Exaktheit, nach der ich früher gestrebt hatte, hatte mich <i>zum</i> Gefangenen der Uhr gemacht .	Cette exactitude que j'avais recherchée autrefois n'avait fait de moi qu'un prisonnier de l'horloge	Täsmällisyys, jota olin aiemmin tavoitellut, oli tehnyt minut kellon vangiksi.
Causation 1: NP + V+ N ^{abstract}				
Han gjorde en rörelse men svarade inte. KE	He made a movement but didn't reply.	Er machte eine Bewegung , sagte aber nichts.	Il fit un mouvement mais ne répondit pas.	Poika liikahti mutta ei vastannut.

Causation 2: NP + V + NP + ADJ

Det fanns bara en förklaring och den <i>gjorde</i> honom hysterisk av skräck HM	The only possible explanation <i>made</i> him hysterical with fright.	Es gab nur eine Erklärung, und die <i>machte</i> ihn hysterisch vor Angst.	Il n'y avait qu'une seule explication possible – et elle le <i>rendait</i> hystérique de terreur.	Asiaan oli yksi ainoa selitys, ja se <i>teki</i> hänet hysteeriseksi pelosta.
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Vad är det hon skriver som <i>gör</i> dig så <i>upprörd</i> ?" MA	What did she write that <i>upset</i> you so much?"	Was hat sie denn geschrieben, das dich so <i>aufwühlt</i> ?"	Qu'est-ce qu'elle écrit donc qui te <i>bouleverse</i> tant?"	Mitä hän kirjoittaa, kun sinä noin <i>hätäännyt</i> ?"
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Causation 3: NP + V + att-S

Kroppsfukten <i>gjorde</i> att järnet rostade, MN	The damp given off by my body had <i>started</i> the iron rusting,	Die Körperfeuchtigkeit <i>führte dazu</i> , dass das Eisen rostete,	L'humidité de mon corps <i>faisait</i> rouiller le fer,	Ruumiistani erittyvä kosteus ruostutti raudan,
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Pro-verb: Anaphoric

Mina spasmer tilltog, det <i>gör</i> de alltid när jag blir upprörd. MA	My convulsions intensified, as they always <i>do</i> when I'm upset.	Meine Spasmen nahmen zu, das <i>tun</i> sie immer, wenn ich mich aufrege.	Comme toujours lorsque je suis hors de moi, mes spasmes s'aggravèrent.	Spasmini voimistuivat; niin ne aina <i>tekevät</i> kun pahastun.
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Placeholder

Fotpatrullerade <i>gjorde</i> man redan. HM	They already had policemen walking the beat,	Fußstreifen hatte man bereits.	Les patrouilles à pied existaient déjà,	Jalkautettuja partioita oli jo nykyiselläänkin.
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Table 1. Translations of *göra* associated with various meanings and syntactic frames

A typical European language such as Swedish has something in the range of 10,000 verbs. The frequency of occurrence, however, singles out a small number of verbs as basic. Some of these are typologically unmarked and tend to have the same basic meaning across a wide range of languages, whereas others are language-specific and hold a prominent position with respect to the typological profile. Even the unmarked verbs have important language-specific characteristics with respect to the extensive patterns of

polysemy that are characteristic of the most frequent verbs. For that reason, it is justified to study each one of the basic verbs in depth. The present paper is just a preliminary sketch of such a study of the Swedish verb *göra* ‘make, do.’

2. Overview of the major uses of *göra* and the corresponding translations

The frequencies of the various uses of *göra* in the Swedish original texts in ESPC are shown in Table 2 together with the frequencies of the major English translations. There are a total of 1,751 occurrences of *göra* (952 in Fiction and 799 in Non-fiction). In only 124 of these examples is *göra* used with a lexical meaning as a verb of production (meaning to cause a physical object to come into existence), which represents only 7% of the total. In this particular use, *make* is used as a translation in 90% of the cases, which is a very high figure in the context of translation equivalents of very frequent verbs. In other uses, the correspondence is much lower. When *göra* is used in combination with an abstract noun (V + N^{abstract}), for example *göra skillnad* ‘make a difference’ and *göra ansträngningar* ‘make efforts,’ *make* is used as a translation in only 33% of the cases. In this case, there are also striking differences with respect to genre which are not shown in the table. In fiction, the combination *göra* + abstract noun accounts only for 18% of the uses, whereas it accounts for 40% of the uses in non-fiction.

Meaning	Syntactic frame	Major translations						
		N	%		N	%		N
Production	NP__ NP (av-NP)	124	7	make	111	90		
Transformation	NP__ NP till-NP	34	2	make	14	41	turn	8
Causative	NP__ NP ^{abstract}	489	28	make	161	33	do	60
	NP__ NP ADJ	174	10	make	111	64		
	NP/att-S__ att-S	54		make	11	21	mean	10
	NP__ det ADJ att-S	30		make	16	53		
Pro-verb		592	34	do	441	74		

<i>Various frequent phrases appearing in this corpus:</i>			
		N	
Relatedness	ha att göra med	53	'have to do with,' 'deal with'
Pain	göra ont	33	<i>det gör ont</i> 'it hurts' and related uses
Indifference	det gör inget	21	'it doesn't matter'
Possession	göra sig av med/kvitt	10	'get rid of,' 'dispose of;' 'spend'
	ha gjort sitt	29	'be/have retired,' 'have done one's bit' ¹
<i>Various other uses</i>		108	
Total (all uses)		1751	

Table 2. The major uses of the verb *göra* and its major translations in the ESPC

A similar table can be prepared for the uses of *göra* in the MPC, but this will not be shown here since that corpus is more limited. In total, there are 516 occurrences of *göra* (all in original Swedish novels as mentioned above). At a broad level, the translation patterns are only to be expected, although a more fine-grained comparison yields interesting results. With the exception of the use of *do* and *tun* as pro-verbs in English and German, the most general verb of production is the major translation equivalent of *göra*: *make* in English, *machen* in German, *faire* in French and *tehdä* in Finnish. An important exception is also the use of *rendre* as the most frequent translation of *göra* + Adjective in French (e.g. *rendre furieux* 'make furious,' *rendre difficile* 'make difficult').

3. *Göra* as a verb of production

Even when *göra* has a lexical meaning and is used as a physical action verb in the semantic field Production, it has a very general meaning. In terms of semantic relations, it serves as a hyperonym of a large number of verbs with a more specific meaning, as can be seen in Swedish WordNet (see References). At present, work has been initiated on another electronic dictionary, namely Swedish FrameNet (Viberg, ms.), as a parallel to FrameNet (Fillmore & al. 2003). According to Fillmore's frame semantics, verbs (and other relational words) evoke frames—schematic structures of recurring situations. As a verb of production, the verb *göra* evokes the frame Intentionally_create, which has the following characterization in the

¹ All examples in one text (SC).

web version of FrameNet: “The Creator creates a new entity, the Created_entity, possibly out of Components.” The syntactic realization of the frame elements can be described with respect to Phrase types (NP, PP...) and grammatical functions (subject, object, complement...) as shown in Table 3.

	Gud <i>God</i>	gjorde/skapade <i>made/created</i>	Eva <i>Eve</i>	av Adams revben <i>out of Adam's rib</i>
Frame elements	Creator		Created_entity	Components
Phrase types	NP	V	NP	PP-av
Grammatical functions	Subject		Object	Complement

Table 3. An analysis of *göra* as a lexical verb according to FrameNet

The frame Intentionally_create has several sub-frames, all of which are realized in Swedish with a number of verbs which all have *göra* as a superordinate term. Sometimes, a verb related to one of these sub-frames is used as a translation in English instead of *make*. Such examples will be used in this section as an illustration. The first sub-frame is Building, which describes assembly or construction actions, where an Agent joins Components together to form a Created_entity:

- (1) Och om nu den gamla brevlådan If the old postbox was in such poor shape
verkar vara i så dåligt skick att den måste that it had to ***be rebuilt***,
göras om /---/ IU

Another sub-frame is Manufacturing, which describes how a Manufacturer produces a Product from a Resource for commercial purposes:

- (2) Att ***göra järn*** krävde mycket ***Producing iron*** required a lot of labour.
arbetskraft. HL

A sub-frame of a somewhat more abstract type is *Text_creation* which describes how an Author creates a Text, either written or spoken, and may have a particular Addressee in mind:

- (3) Det var också mitt syfte när jag ***gjorde*** It was also my aim when I ***wrote*** this
detta betänkande, EGAH report

- (4) Jag **gjorde** många berättelser under denna tid och Hugo fick höra de flesta. AP
I **made up** a lot of stories during that time, and Hugo had to listen to most of them.

The use of *göra* called Transformation in Table 1 is related to Production but is more abstract since it normally does not describe the coming into existence of a new entity but rather a change with respect to the nature of an entity. Transformation corresponds to the frame Cause_change in FrameNet. This frame is characterized in the following way: An Agent causes an Entity to change, either in its category membership or in terms of the value of an Attribute. In the following example, the NP *the greatest protestant commander in the field* does not introduce a new referent but a new attribute:

- (5) Triumfen vid Breitenfeld i september 1631 **gjorde** Gustav II Adolf **till** protestanternas störste härförare HL
The triumph at Breitenfeld in September 1631 **made** Gustavus II Adolphus the greatest Protestant commander in the field

Even if *make* is the most frequent English translation of *göra* in this use, the verb *turn* is a rather frequent alternative:

- (6) Minsta vindkantring kunde ha **gjort** flera av hans ankarplatser **till** dödsfällor. BL
The least change of the wind could have **turned** some of his anchoring-places **into** death-traps.

When *göra* describes a transformation, it has another set of hyponyms than when it describes production. The most characteristic of these is *förvandla* ‘change, turn, transform,’ which is used in the same syntactic frame as *göra* as a verb of transformation (see Table 1):

- (7) Erik XIV **förvandlade** borgarna **till** representativa fursteslott med smyckade tak och paneler, AA
Eric **turned** the castles **into** princely palaces with ornamented ceilings and panelling,

4. *Göra* as a verb of causation

All verbs belong to a small number of dynamic classes which form a *dynamic system* that cuts across all verbal semantic fields. Focusing on the core of this system, a verb can either designate a state (no change) or a change, and in the latter case the verb can either be inchoative referring to a pure change without any indication of the cause, or causative, e.g. *Harry*

died (Inchoative) and *Peter killed Harry* (Causative). Within a language, there are a number of ways to form complex (surface) predicates which fulfil the same function as a simple verb and in several cases can be used to paraphrase simple verbs (usually with some change in meaning). One such device is the use of Verb + Abstract Noun instead of a simple verb: *ask* ⇒ *put a question*, *visit* ⇒ *pay a visit to*, etc. In Swedish and English, the most basic verbs of possession meaning ‘have,’ ‘get’ and ‘give’ in combination with abstract nouns form a very productive system generating complex predicates which represent states, inchoatives or causatives (Viberg 2002 a, b). The same dynamic contrasts are basic when complex predicates are formed with adjectives: ‘be,’ ‘become’ and ‘make.’ Sometimes it is possible to form a complete set of parallel predicates as shown schematically in Table 4 (taken from Viberg, 1979), which shows various ways to form emotive predicates related to happiness.

<i>Dynamic meaning</i>	<i>Word class</i>		
	Noun	Adjective	Verb
STATE	X hade glädje av Y	X var glad (åt Y)	X gladdes/gladde sig åt Y (Passive/Reflexive)
INCHOATIVE	X fick glädje av Y	X blev glad (åt Y)	
CAUSATIVE	Y gav X glädje	Y gjorde X glad	Y gladde X
	have/get/give happiness	be/become/make happy	Emotion verb

Table 4. Verbs as dynamic operators in combination with Abstract Nouns and Adjectives.

In this system, *göra* is the basic dynamic operator of causation in combination with an adjective. It is also a common alternative to *ge* ‘give’ as a causative operator in combination with an abstract noun. The choice between these two verbs and several other alternatives appears to be partly predictable and partly lexicalized in a rather complex way. In addition, *göra* can be used as a causative verb taking a sentential object introduced by *att* ‘that’ which describes the result. In this short sketch, I will concentrate on this use and discuss how it is related to the major

‘periphrastic’ causatives *få* and *låta*. (Swedish does not have any productive morphological causative.)

As a causative verb, *låta* is combined with an object and a bare infinitive:

(8) Jag <i>lät</i> båten	I <i>let</i> the boat	Ich <i>ließ</i> das	Je <i>laissai</i> la	<i>Annoin</i> veneen
långsamt glida	slowly glide	Boot langsam	barque glisser	liukua hitaasti
fram, och stanna.	forward and	vorausgleiten,	lentement en	eteenpäin, ja
POE	stop.	dann anhalten.	avant, puis	pysähtyä.
			s’immobiliser.	

Låta allows a continuum of interpretations from permission, via enablement to mild coercion. Following Verhagen & Kemmer (1997), it expresses indirect causation which is defined as “a situation that is conceptualized in such a way that it is recognized that *some other force* besides the initiator is the *most* immediate source of energy in the effected event.” (op. cit. p. 67; italics in the original) The above example implies that the causer (realized as subject of *låta*) controlled the motion of the boat (e.g. could but did not stop it) but that there was an intermediary force that drove the boat forwards. The translations used in this example appears to be the most common equivalents of *låta* used as a causative verb: English *let*, German *lassen* and French *laisser* and Finnish *antaa*, which has the basic meaning ‘give.’

The major periphrastic causative in Swedish is the verb *få* ‘get, may’ which is one of the most frequent verbs in Swedish and has a very complex pattern of polysemy with several language-specific characteristics (Viberg 2002a, forthc.). As an analytic causative, it is combined with an object and an infinitive with the infinitive marker *att*:

(9) – Niila! sa jag och försökte <i>få</i> honom att repetera. MN	‘Niila!’ I said, and tried to <i>make</i> him say it after me.	”Niila!”, sagte ich und versuchte ihn <i>dazu</i> zu <i>bringen</i> , das Wort zu wiederholen.	– Niila ! dis-je, en essayant de le lui <i>faire</i> repéter.	– Niila! minä sanoin ja yritin <i>saada</i> hänet toistamaan.
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The most common translation of *få* as a causative verb is *make* in English and *faire* in French, which in other uses correspond to Swedish

göra, which in turn is not used as a causative verb with infinitive complements. Finnish uses *saada* which is a rather close equivalent to *få* and also has the basic meaning ‘get, receive.’ German uses *bringen* ‘bring’ as a translation in this example and this appears to be a rather common translation but another common translation is *lassen* (as in the example below), which is not restricted to indirect causation in German but has a very wide extension. The verb *få* expresses a kind of direct causation in the sense that the agent realized as subject of *få* not only is the initiator of the event but also exerts energy in some form to achieve a result. However, when the subject is human, the verb *få* in many respects is related to verbs of success (e.g. *manage*, *succeed*) and closely related to the notion of human interest in a way that is rather language-specific. The verb *få* can, however, be used also in combination with a non-intentional human subject, so the notion of success is only a default interpretation and *få* can also be used with an inanimate subject as in the following example:

(10) Fartvinden	The wind only	Der Fahrtwind	Le vent <i>fit</i>	Ilmavirta liehutti
<i>fick</i> hennes hår att	<i>made</i> her hair	<i>ließ</i> ihr Haar	voler ses	hänen hiuksiaan
fladdra MA	blow,	flattern	cheveux	

As already noted, *göra* is not used as a causative verb in combination with an infinitive (at least not without further modification, see below) but it can be used in combination with a finite sentential complement (introduced with *att* ‘that’) which describes the effected situation.

(11) Tankarna på familjen och de tio åren	Thinking about the family and the past
som gått hade <i>gjort</i> att hon hade missat	ten years had <i>made</i> her miss the first exit.
den första avtagsvägen. HM2	

In English, *make* is actually the most frequent translation but only accounts for 21% of the translations of *göra* in this use (see Table 2). The construction is also different since *make* is not combined with a finite sentential complement but with an object followed by a bare infinitive. Another relatively frequent translation is *mean*, which is combined with a finite sentential complement:

(12) Lönesituationen <i>gör</i> att många helt	Low pay levels <i>mean</i> that many people
enkelt inte har råd att vara på sin	simply cannot afford to spend more than
arbetsplats annat än under en del av	part of their working hours at their places

arbetstiden. CO

of work.

The use of *mean* as a translation of this type of constructions with *göra* is related to the fact that the subject of *göra* is non-human and is often conceptualized more as a reason inferred by logical reasoning than as a causer exerting energy that brings about the result.

Göra is also used with some frequency as a causative in phrases containing an infinitive of the following type: *göra det möjligt/nödvändigt/lätt (för NP) att VP^{Infinitive}* ‘make it possible/necessary/ easy (for NP) to VP^{Infinitive}. Such phrases express various shades of enabling causation:

(13) Effektiviteten och integrationen främjar tillväxten, vilket *gör det möjligt att* höja medborgarnas välfärd. LU1

Efficiency and integration promote growth, *making it possible to* improve the welfare of people in Sweden.

(14) En bättre information om miljöhotens relativa betydelse och effekterna av olika åtgärder kan *göra det lättare för* enskilda, företag och myndigheter att handla miljövänligt. LU1

Better information about the relative importance of environmental threats and the effects of different measures can *make it easier for* individuals, enterprises and authorities to act in conformity with the environment.

5. *Göra* as pro-verb and placeholder

The use of *göra* as a pro-verb covers around one third of all the occurrences of the verb. As can be seen in Table 2, English uses *do* as a translation in 74% of the cases when *göra* is used as a pro-verb and that is a high degree of correspondence. The situation is not as simple in German, in which *machen* and *tun* alternate as pro-verbs. Actually, the term pro-verb covers several different uses of *göra*. It can be used to describe an unspecified action, as in wh-questions. In this case *machen* is the major translation in German:

(15) – Vad <i>gör</i> vi nu? LM	”What are we <i>doing</i> now?”	”Was <i>machen</i> wir als nächstes?”	– Qu’est-ce qu’on <i>fait</i> maintenant ?	– Mitä nyt <i>teemme</i> ?
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In examples like the following one, *göra* is often said to have an anaphoric function:

(16) Drömmar ...?	'Dreams?'	"Träume?"	– Elle <i>rêve</i> ... ?	– Uniako... ?
– Men det är klart	'But of course	"Klar <i>träumt</i>	– Bien sûr,	– Tottahan hän
att hon <i>drömmer</i> ,	she <i>dreams</i> ,	sie, das <i>tun</i> alle	comme tout le	nyt <i>unia näkee</i> ,
det <i>gör</i> alla. MF	everyone <i>does</i> .		monde	kaikkihan niitä
				<i>näkevät</i> .

In Swedish, *göra* is usually combined with the pronoun *det* 'it' as an object which in most cases is preposed as in this example. This means that the anaphoric function is primarily filled by the pronoun and the verb functions more or less like a slot-filler or placeholder for the verb (see below). In the anaphoric function, *tun* appears to be more frequent as a translation than *machen*. The translations into French and Finnish show alternatives that occur as translations of the anaphoric use in all languages. French in this case uses a kind of ellipsis and Finnish repeats the full verb from the preceding clause (literally 'see' since the verb dream is expressed 'see dreams'). The corpus is too small to tell whether some language or languages favour certain alternatives.

There is at least one specialized use of anaphoric *göra* which appears to be very language-specific, namely its use in so-called short answers to yes/no-questions, which are rather common in conversation. This use of *göra* is described in a Swedish grammar intended for language learners (Viberg & al 1984, §4.7). In many of the 18 languages to which the grammar has been translated *göra* is not used, but the main verb is repeated as in the following example from Turkish. The major exception is English.

<i>Swedish</i>	<i>Turkish</i>	<i>English</i>
– Läste han?	Okudu mu?	Did he read?
	read-PAST Question-particle	
– Ja, det gjorde han.	Evet, okudu.	Yes, he did.
– Nej, det gjorde han inte.	Hayır, okumadı.	No, he didn't.
	no read-NEG-PAST	

Another rather language-specific use of *göra* is its use as a placeholder in VP-topicalization (Hammarberg & Viberg 1977). In Swedish, a VP containing a finite verb can be topicalized (primarily in colloquial style) as in the following example:

- (17) Något måste de ju ta sej för medan de väntade, och väntade *gjorde* de alla tolv på vad som nu skulle ske där uppe i tornrummet. AL After all, they had to do something while they waited, and all twelve of them were waiting for what was about to happen up there in the tower room.

Literally, the crucial part of the example reads: (...) *while they waited, and waited did they*. Following the functional characterization in Källgren & Prince (1989, 52), the initial VP in the last clause is topicalized and evokes an activity that is already in the discourse model, whereas the focal information is the polarity (affirmation/negation) of the whole proposition. The affirmative polarity is signalled by tonical stress on the finite form of *göra*. In this use, *göra* does not contribute any meaning that is not already present but serves a place-holding function both as a bearer of the stress that falls on the finite verb and to avoid the interpretation of the clause as a yes/no-question (cf. *Väntade de* ‘did they wait’ vs. *Väntade gjorde de* with VP-topicalization). The other languages in the MPC do not have a similar construction and have to take recourse to various types of paraphrase, as can be observed in the example given in Table 1.

6. Conclusion

The present paper touches certain areas that have been the topic of a great number of studies such as causative structures and the distinction between ‘do’ and ‘make’ in West Germanic languages. However, the ambition has not been to contribute to these specialized fields but rather to see the relationships between all the uses of a single basic verb and its role in the organisation of the lexicon at a general level and also the close relationship between lexicon and grammar.

As a lexical verb, *göra* serves as a nuclear verb in the semantic field of production. Like other nuclear verbs (see Viberg forthc.), *göra* can appear in a wide range of semantic and syntactic frames characteristic of the field, and it also has a large number of hyponyms (or troponyms). As a grammatical verb, *göra* fulfils two quite different functions and serves both as an analytic causative marker and as a pro-verb. The uses of *göra* as a causative verb only partly correspond to its closest lexical correspondents as verbs of production in the languages in the MPC. For example, it is not used in combination with VP^{Infinitive} as English *make* and French *faire*. The use of *göra* as a pro-verb is a verbal parallel both to indefinite pronouns

and to anaphoric pronouns. As a pro-verb it has a tendency to develop into a placeholder serving as a slot-filler in the Swedish word order system, which could be regarded as a parallel to the use of *det* 'it' as a placeholder in various types of constructions with a so-called impersonal subject.

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Contact information:

Åke Viberg
Department of Linguistics and Philology,
Uppsala University, Sweden
Ake(dot)Viberg(at)lingfil(dot)uu(dot)se
<http://www.lingfil.uu.se/personal/viberg/>