

## Asymmetric causation types in the competing complements of negative causative verbs: NP (from) V-ing

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Interaction between the meaning of verbs and their complementation patterns reveals how the language categorizes our event-related concepts. This study focuses on the omission of the preposition *from* from the complements of negative causative verbs, which represent the nonrealization of a situation expressed by *V-ing*.

Mair (2002) reports the rapid increase of *prevent* NP *V-ing* compared with the *prevent* NP *from V-ing* variant in British English, while such a change is not observed in American English. Mair mentioned the possibility of semantically similar verbs following the omission of *from*, but did not test it due to the small size of the corpora. Using the British National Corpus, this study examines the two complement variants (*from* and *from-less*), analyzing the cooccurring verbs (*V-ing*) and exploring any semantic factors underlying the shift.

Occurrences of the *from-less* variant showed a significantly higher frequency with *being* passives in the complements of *prevent* and *stop*, as well as with verbs of occurrence (*happen, arise, occur*) in complements of *prevent*. However other concurrent verbs give no distinction between the two variants of *prevent* and *stop*.

The ratio of *from* and *from-less* variants is 6:4 for *prevent*, 3:7 for *stop*. With 13 verbs of negative causation added, the ratio of the two variants reveals three subclasses within the negative causative verbs: barriers or obstacles (*prevent, stop, hinder, block, preclude, inhibit, bar*), prohibition (*prohibit, ban, forbid*), and human interaction (*deter, discourage, dissuade, restrain*) (cf. Rudanko (2002) for the terminology).

Among the verbs of barriers or obstacles, the *from-less* variant increases in various degrees, in contrast to the verbs of human interaction which retain *from*. The verbs of prohibition are in an intermediate stage of the shifting process, with only a few *from-less* examples. This contrast can be explained by the four causation types—physical, volitional, affective, inducive (Talmy, 1976; Croft, 1991). Verbs of barriers or obstacles express all causation types including the physical causation, which describes nonvolitional, nonsentient causal events. On the other hand, verbs of human interaction, whose objects are animate or human-related exclusively, and verbs of prohibition, with authoritative subjects, do not express physical causation.

The results of this study show a statistical tendency of causation types being applied to the three subclasses of verbs, rather than a direct semantic divergence between the two variants, such as hypothetical or realized (Sellgren, 2010), indirect or direct means (Dixon, 1991). This study also reconfirms that American English retains the *from* variant using data from the Corpus of Contemporary American English.

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