Abstract

Nominalizations in German Support Verb Constructions
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Support verb constructions (SVC), such as to take a risk or to set into motion, are composed of a support verb (SV, e.g. take, set) and a predicative noun (PredN, e.g. risk, motion), which is – in most cases – a nominalization of a verb or an adjective. The verb component is semantically reduced, when compared to its main verb meaning. The construction as a whole is closely related to the derivation basis of the nominalization; this base verb or adjective mainly determines the semantics and the argument structure of the whole construction. This specific type of complex predicate formation has always been a challenge for natural language processing and machine translation.

My presentation concentrates on German support verb constructions with verb nominalizations (Verbindung, Kontakt, Anwendung, Beachtung etc.). In the first part, I will outline how SVCs differ from typical idioms on the one hand and from typical “regular” constructions on the other hand with regard to three aspects: semantic compositionality, component substitution, and morphosyntactic flexibility. In the second part I will compare the properties of nominalizations when used as predicative nouns in SVCs (“Verbindung” in “in Verbindung treten”) with their properties in “regular” constructions (“Verbindung” in “die Verbindung abstreiten”). In both parts I will discuss findings of case studies based on data from the DWDS corpus (cf. www.dwds.de).