

# Aboutness in Danish

## - unmarked and marked

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This article deals with a methodological issue in the analysis of the linguistic forms that Danish makes available for indicating the topic of an utterance. There are several analyses of such forms in grammatical descriptions of Danish and other languages. The motivation for this article is that these analyses have been based on unmarked forms, which are semantically non-specific relative to other forms in the paradigm they are part of. This means that they are non-specific in terms of topic indication and it is not an obvious methodological approach to take these forms as a starting point. The alternative is to take a starting point in the marked forms, that is, forms that are semantically specific relative to other forms in the paradigm they are part of, and thus, specific in terms of topic indication. Based on a pragmatic, socio-cognitive model of the aboutness relation, the article evaluates and discusses the explanatory power of two methodologically different analyses of the linguistic forms that Danish makes available for indicating the topic of an utterance: one that takes a starting point in the unmarked forms, and one that takes a starting point in the marked forms. In view of the evaluations and the discussion, the article recommends the latter methodological approach.

**KEYWORDS:** aboutness; information structure; markedness; topic; focus