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Inhalt

Lotte Hogeweg, Eric McCready & Grégoire Winterstein

Formal approaches to discourse particles and modal adverbs: Editorial

Upsorn Tawilapakul

On the Role of the Particle $\text{ləew}45$ in Thai

Grégoire Winterstein

Only without its scales

Yurie Hara & Tomohide Kinuhata

Osaka Japanese Nen: One-sided Public Belief and Paratactic Association

Chungmin Lee

Evidentials and Modals: What Makes them Unique

Regine Eckardt

Particles as Speaker Indexicals in Free Indirect Discourse

Anna Chernilovskaya

What Russian men do with exclamatives

Eric McCready

How to Coordinate on Pragmatic Content

Formal approaches to discourse particles and modal adverbs: Editorial

Autor:

Hogeweg, Lotte, McCready, Eric & Winterstein, Grégoire

Aufsatztitel:

Formal approaches to discourse particles and modal adverbs

Jahrgang:

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5-10

Abstract:

The articles presented in this volume are the proceedings of the fourth workshop on formal approaches to discourse particles and modal adverbs, which took place in Ljubljana in August 2011. Discourse particles form a borderline case between semantics and pragmatics, and can thus be the source of new insights in both domains. Usually, the formal description of the meaning of discourse particles involves more dimensions than what is usually taken into account in semantic description. Therefore, their study gives clues about the articulation between various layers of meaning, especially given that the combination of discourse particles is possible, but not in an arbitrary manner. A proper account of the meaning of discourse particles is also a very promising avenue for computational linguistics since they are precious indicators for the disambiguation of discourse structure and speaker intentions. Probably one of the biggest challenges in the study of discourse particles is that of variety. First, the meanings conveyed by discourse particles cover a wide range of interpretations and effects. Among other things, discourse particles can convey intensification and emotivity, affect speech acts, bear on informational structure aspects or constrain the structure of the discourse they are used in. Another domain of great variation is that of the differences between languages. While some languages lexicalize a great number of particles (e.g. Japanese and German) others are much poorer in this domain, and between languages that do have discourse particles, the lexicalized meanings greatly differ. Finally, the formal approaches used to characterize properly the meaning of discourse particles also prove very varied and go from dynamic semantics to decision theory, quite often borrowing from several trends.

All the papers presented in this volume are representative of this variety. The particles studied belong to several languages (Thai, Russian, Japanese, Korean, English and German) convey very different meaning (emphasis, exclusion, epistemic features etc.) and are analyzed in different ways, depending on the meaning conveyed by each particle.

On the Role of the Particle *læw45* in Thai

Autor:

Tawilapakul, Upsorn

Aufsatztitel:

On the Role of the Particle *læw45* in Thai

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11-28

Abstract:

This paper discusses the role of the particle *læw45* in Thai. Conventionally, *læw45* is regarded as a perfective aspect marker (Kanchanawan, 1978; Boonyapatipark, 1983; among others). The reappraisal of the role of *læw45* in this paper, however, offers an argument against the conventional idea. The addition of *læw45* is not mainly aimed at temporal effects. Rather, its presence generates a presupposition concerning the past belief about the state of the topic. The particle also plays a role as marker of counter- expectation. Applying optimality-theoretic pragmatics as proposed by Blutner (2000) and the presupposition constraints created by Zeevat (2002, 2004, 2009), the paper exhibits how the two alternatives are selected and rejected in different situations.

Only without its scales

Autor:

Winterstein, Grégoire

Aufsatztitel:

Only without its scales

Jahrgang:

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29-47

Abstract:

This work deals with one specific aspect of the semantics of the exclusive adverb *only*, namely its scalarity. It is argued that, contra several analyses, it is not necessary to postulate that *only* conventionally encodes a scalar constraint on its associate. Rather, I argue in favor

of the idea that the scalar effects that can be observed in some uses of only are pragmatic by-products of its core exclusive meaning. This position is essentially defended in the light of data where only intuitively marks a high point on a scale, rather than a low point as is usually assumed. This data proves to be problematic for all accounts that encode scalarity directly into only.

Osaka Japanese *Nen*: One-sided Public Belief and Paratactic Association

Autor:

Hara, Yurie & Kinuhata, Tomohide

Aufsatztitel:

Osaka Japanese *Nen*: One-sided Public Belief and Paratactic Association

Jahrgang:

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49-70

Abstract:

Particles often have discourse functions similar to intonational tunes. For instance, a question meaning can be expressed with either a rising intonation or a particle in many languages: Japanese *ka*, Chinese *ma*, Javanese *opo* (Cole et al., 2008) etc. An assertive speech act can be modified by both particles and intonations in order to convey different nuances. This paper looks into a sentence-final particle *nen* used in Osaka Japanese.

Evidentials and Modals: What Makes them Unique

Autor:

Lee, Chungmin

Aufsatztitel:

Evidentials and Modals: What Makes them Unique

Jahrgang:

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71-98

Abstract:

This paper is concerned with types of evidentials and modals, their interactions and perspective shiftability in evidentials, epistemic modals, and psychological (experiencer) predicates in Korean and English (and in Japanese where relevant). The evidence acquisition time denoted by *-te* is prior to the speech time. The marker *-te* can be either direct or inferential with null tense, and inferential if result-based with PAST-marking. Shiftability may be universal, as McCready (2010) claims, and how and why will be addressed. Expressions of sensory, evidential and epistemological meanings require perspective shift to the hearer=speaker-to-be in questions, but expressions of indexical nature including honorifics typically do not show shiftability (i.e. monsters are rare). Conjectural questions are typically self-addressed by the speaker.

Particles as Speaker Indexicals in Free Indirect Discourse

Autor:

Eckardt, Regine

Aufsatztitel:

Particles as Speaker Indexicals in Free Indirect Discourse

Jahrgang:

35/36

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99-119

Abstract:

Free indirect discourse (FID) is one of the many varieties of reported speech. It is commonly agreed that passages in FID have to be interpreted relative to two context parameters $\langle C, c \rangle$, the narrator context C and the context of speech/thought of the protagonist c . While temporal and locational shifting indexicals have received extensive discussion in the literature, shiftable reference to the speaker is a largely neglected phenomenon, to the exception of Schlenker (1999, 2004) and Sharvit (2008). I offer an analysis of German speaker oriented particles as shifting indexicals which reveals how particles can be used to indicate speaker shifts in free indirect discourse.

What Russian men do with exclamation marks

Autor:

Anna Chernilovskaya

Aufsatztitel:

What Russian men do with exclamation marks

Jahrgang:

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121-136

Abstract:

This paper studies so-called “expressive particles” on the example of the Russian particle “nichego sebe”, whose main effect on an utterance is to express that the speaker observes something unexpected. In particular, I make a pragmatic proposal considering this kind of particles as modifiers of the exclamative speech act operator. This approach is compared to a semantic analysis (like that in (McCready, 2009) for the English particle “man”) taking expressive particles to act on the denotation of the host sentence.

How to Coordinate on Pragmatic Content

Autor:

McCready, Eric

Aufsatztitel:

How to Coordinate on Pragmatic Content

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137-149

Abstract:

McCready (2011) is an exploration of how speakers might recognize each other’s intentions in a highly specific discourse domain: the kind of emotive content found in e. g. expressives, which has the property of being underspecified across a relatively constrained space. This paper considers possible extensions of the general account to other kinds of pragmatic content, focusing on the resolution of (object) quantifier domain restrictions and contextual standards for gradable adjectives.