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## Journal of Pragmatics

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## Book review

**Pragmatic markers, discourse markers and modal particles: New perspectives, Chiara Fedriani, Andrea Sansó (Eds.). John Benjamins, Amsterdam/Philadelphia (2017). ix, 492 pp. ISBN 978 90 272 59516, EUR 99,00 (hardback).**

“Pragmatic Markers, Discourse Markers and Modal Particles: New perspectives” is published in the Benjamins’ “Studies in Language Companion Series”. It aims to update and advance the ongoing theoretical and methodological discussion of research on Pragmatic Markers (PMs), Discourse Markers (DMs) and Modal Particles (MPs) with a broad collection of offering a variety of approaches, analyses, and perspectives. The editors’ introduction provides a roadmap through the issues and debates and anchors the contributions to this volume in the state of the art. The editors acknowledge the special status of MPs, which are well-researched in formal and functional approaches and generally treated as a closed class of items that “participate in a paradigm as signals of the speaker’s evaluation of the information status of his/her utterance” (p.2), whereas PMs, signaling social and interpersonal cohesion, and DMs, concerning textual cohesion, are much more heterogeneous in form and function and tend to be studied individually in different frameworks (but see Schiffrin, 1987).

The 17 chapters in the volume are grouped into four parts. The first part addresses general theoretical questions and quantitative approaches (Chapters 1–5). In Chapter 1, Yael Maschler reports a functional and diachronic analysis of 191 tokens of (SUBJ)-NEG-PRED constructions of the Hebrew mental verb *yada* (‘know’) and the development towards the discourse marker *loydea/loydat* (‘I dunno MASC/FEM’) in a corpus of casual interactions. She concludes that the employment of the construction is highly formulaic and not necessarily epistemic, and identifies two grammaticization paths: one associated with the epistemic stance of uncertainty, repair preface, changing the course of talk, and ‘dying out’ uses, and the other associated with ‘dying out’ uses and avoidance of dispreferred response.

Catherine T. Bolly, Ludivine Crible, Liesbeth Degand and Deniz Uygur-Distexhe (Chapter 2) present an annotation experiment testing their Model for Discourse Marker Annotation (MDMA), where ‘discourse marker’ covers PMs, DMs, and MPs. Initial identification of potential DMs yielded 152 types with 1181 occurrences in a 5000-word sample from existing corpora of spoken French. A random sample of 200 potential DMs was annotated in context for syntactic, semantic-pragmatic, and co-textual features. Syntactic position was the strongest predictor of the annotators’ intuitive classification, which was, however, non-consensual in 46.5% of the cases; only 39 tokens were consensually identified as DMs. Given this lack of consensus and the rather small sample size, the statistical analyses presented seem of doubtful validity. It would have been helpful for an assessment of the results and for comparisons with other studies to have access to the list of 152 types, preferably also showing the consensus scores for each item.

Another, more detailed, proposal for the annotation of discourse markers, with which 3157 tokens of French and English DMs were manually identified and annotated, is presented by Ludivine Crible in Chapter 3. She defines DMs as “a grammatically heterogeneous, multifunctional class of pragmatic markers, functioning on a metadiscursive level as procedural cues to situate the host unit in a co-built representation of on-going discourse” (p.106) and subsumes DMs under a superordinate class of PMs (with subclasses interjections, discourse markers, modal particles, response signals, and politeness expressions). In her carefully elaborated and usefully layered annotation system, however, she does include semantic uses of discourse connectives (annotated as “ideational”), although those uses are neither pragmatic nor usually metadiscursive. The definition of DMs thus clearly needs rethinking.

Dionysis Goutsos (Chapter 4) explores the role of position in judging DMs, PMs and MPs in Greek by examining how positional preferences for markers correlate with their functions. The article examines 54 functional markers, based on a one-million-word dataset drawn from the *Corpus of Greek Texts*, consisting of academic texts, newspaper opinion articles, parliamentary speeches and radio and TV interviews. Three positions are distinguished in clauses and sentences: first, second, and any later words. The findings suggest that there are positional preferences for Greek functional markers: items that can be described as DMs and PMs often appear in the first position, grammaticalized items second, and MPs in third position.

In Chapter 5, Andriana Costăchescu observes (following Schlangen and Lascarides, 2003) that DMs and short answers in dialogues share some basic features: (i) they are semantically under-specified and (ii) the receiver adds, by deduction,

significant elements, in order to narrow or even eliminate the semantic under-specification. She analyzes the occurrence of the French DM *quoi* ('what') in literary texts and identifies the rhetorical relations (such as explanation, contrast and phatic) with which *quoi* occurs to illustrate the possibility of integrating DMs into the Segmented Discourse Representation Theory (SDRT) framework, without however, discussing how such an integration should be formalized or how the envisaged integration would differ from the treatment of discourse connectives in e.g. the Penn Discourse Treebank (Prasad et al., 2008), the Prague Discourse Treebank (Rysová et al., 2016), or DiMlex (Stede, 2002).

The second part of the volume (Chapters 6–8) deals with the status of modal particles. Werner Abraham in Chapter 6 investigates the functional and semantic links between modal particles and verum focus (grammatical focus, focus on grammatical instead of lexical morphemes) and compares the behavior of modal particles with that of speech act adverbials. Both modal particles and verum focus have a truth-valuating function, signal topics, and foreground a proposition, but modal particles have stronger illocutive force. Unlike speech act adverbials, modal particles set up a thematic common ground to be negotiated with the addressee.

Mario Squartini in Chapter 7 observes a polarity-related regional variation in the Italian non-canonical negator *mica* in direct questions. *Mica* is considered as a modal particle expressing a mirative (surprised) reaction and thus contributing to the speaker's information management. In a widely accepted use (MICA<sub>1</sub>), the question concerns a state of affairs the speaker had not expected to be true; in the regionally restricted variant (MICA<sub>2</sub>), the speaker expresses surprise that an expected situation might not be true. In both cases, the information must be discourse-old and hearer-new; they differ in the direction of the polarity mismatch.

In Chapter 8, Marijana Kresić, Mia Batinić Angster and Gabriele Diewald present a format for a cross-linguistic corpus-based description of the formal features and discourse-grammatical functions of modal particles and their equivalents, exemplified with an analysis of the German MP *bloß* and its equivalents in Croatian and English. Those three languages occupy different positions on a cline from MP languages (German) to languages without a word category of MPs (English). Croatian and also e.g. Italian occupy an intermediate position with a broad and heterogeneous group of non-inflecting, synsemantic words that occur as single elements or as MP groups. The analysis describes occurrences of MPs or MP equivalents in different sentence types in terms of focusing, morphological and syntactic properties, context, meaning paraphrase, and usage examples. The format thus promises to be a useful tool for cross-linguistic analyses.

Part 3 of the volume presents language-specific and diachronic studies (Chapters 9–14). Friederike Kleinknecht and Miguel Souza (Chapter 9) discuss familiarizers, i.e., vocatives that denote solidarity and intimacy, as a source category for pragmatic markers and discourse markers. They illustrate this with the development of *güey* ('ox') to *wey* in Mexican Spanish and *alter* ('old man') to *alla* in German. The process involves the loss of the deictic reference to the addressee, semantic bleaching, formal fossilization and phonetic reduction and the emergence of functions concerning turn management and, especially, information management.

In Chapter 10, Gabriella Mazzon presents several case studies on the development and pragmaticalization of various English DMs (*now*, *pray*, *please*, *I'm afraid*, *well*, etc.). The paper discusses the gradual emergence of subjective and inter-subjective meanings, which is then often followed by a weakening and even reversal of the pragmatic force: elements signaling epistemic stance shift to the expression of deontic stance, polite markers acquire values of impoliteness, hedges become signals of conflictive and confrontational values.

Rumiko Shinzato (Chapter 11) discusses function-periphery mappings in the grammaticalization of Japanese discourse markers (Left Periphery), modal markers (Right Periphery), and pragmatic markers (Core). The source items of discourse markers and modal markers, but not pragmatic markers, share class memberships and show the preferred directionality of positional shifts based on their semantic characters, while pragmatic markers remain within the core. In contrast to Beeching and Detges (2014), Shinzato argues that Left Periphery and Right Periphery are both subjective and intersubjective, reflecting the symmetric Japanese layered structure.

Anna Giacalone Ramat, Caterina Mauri and Andrea Sansò (Chapter 12) discuss the pragmatic functions of four dubitative-corrective constructions in Italian. These constructions encode the two functions of casting a doubt over the presupposition (dubitative function) and introducing a correction to a previously denied option (corrective function), but are also used as mitigators. In three cases, the diachronic source is a scalar construction and the dubitative function emerged after the corrective function; in one case, the source is a conditional construction and the simple dubitative function emerged before the dubitative-corrective function.

Magdalena Adamczyk in Chapter 13 discusses the pragmatic expansion of the Polish approximation/indeterminacy marker *gdzieś tam* ('somewhere (there)/about'). In a collection of 274 uses of the phrase in internet sources and corpora of spoken Polish, canonical uses were found to predominantly modify adverbial phrases, while non-canonical *gdzieś tam* functions as a PM or DM and co-occurs with hedging expressions. Non-canonical *gdzieś tam* fulfills hedging functions as a vagueness marker or as a mitigator of illocutionary force or stylistic anomaly, or a non-hedging function as a marker of concept framing.

Stephan Giuliani in Chapter 14 explores the potential of Joseph Wright's English Dialect Dictionary, in particular its digital version (EDD Online), for historical pragmatic research and discusses essential theoretical and methodological considerations. Giuliani presents three case studies of the non-standard DMs *awee* (akin to, but more restricted than Standard English *well*), *lor-a-massy* (from 'Lord have mercy') and *Arrah* (used in accosting a person, or in calling attention) that illustrate the importance of qualitative analysis of the attested uses, which should be supplemented with consultations of the cited works and the OED where possible.

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