



International Pragmatics Association
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ABSTRACTS



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14th INTERNATIONAL PRAGMATICS CONFERENCE

SPECIAL THEME: Language and adaptability

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Editors of *Pragmatics*: *Charles Briggs*, Department of Anthropology, University of California at Berkeley, Kroeber Hall 210, Berkeley, CA 94720-3710, USA; *Frank Brisard*, University of Antwerp, Dept. of Linguistics, Prinsstraat 13, 2000 Antwerp, Belgium; *Yoko Fujii*, Department of English, Japan Women's University, 2-8-1, Mejiro-dai, Bunkyo-ku, Tokyo, 112-8681, Japan; *Helmut Gruber*, University of Vienna, Department of Linguistics, Berggasse 11, A-1090 Vienna, Austria; *Sophia Marmaridou*, Dept. of Language and Linguistics, Fac. of English, University of Athens, University Campus Zografou, GR 157 84 Greece; *Rosina Marquez Reiter*, University of Surrey, Faculty of Arts and Human Sciences, AC Building, Guildford, Surrey, GU2 7XH, United Kingdom; Editor-in-Chief: *Gunter Senft*, Max-Planck-Institute for Psycholinguistics, PB 310, NL-6500 AH Nijmegen, The Netherlands

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The abstracts printed in this booklet are in the form in which they were submitted. In order to keep the book size reasonable, reference lists were taken out. All lengthy illustrations and examples that could be taken out without rendering the abstract unintelligible were taken out in cases where the total abstract length exceeded the limits specified in the call for papers.

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sequence taken from a *National Public Radio* broadcast reporting on the findings of a social psychological study to substantiate the pervasive nature of gender stereotyping in scientific practice, and (2) a lecture on the historiography of women in the development of science. With regard to the first of these, where the implications of evidence contradict assumptions regarding the pervasive nature of individually held stereotypes, that evidence is marshaled to underwrite a model of prejudice as ideologically autonomous. With regard to the second, we consider how commonsense assumptions about the moral accountability of gender equality are invoked to warrant relational criteria for a definition of historical accuracy. In both cases, the inferential consequence of investigative efforts to recover otherwise undocumented instances of prejudice is dependent on the premises of gender equality that are made relevant to the investigation from the outset. Finally, we consider how the version of scientific discovery repudiated in these formulations of stereotyping otherwise function to manage accountability within a falsification model of scientific knowledge as advocated by Karl Popper and described by Jean-Francois Lyotard. If falsification is seen as essential to extending scientific insight, then a non-relational, individual model of scientific achievement provides the rhetorical means to document the extension of knowledge. Scientific discovery is described in terms of autonomous achievement in order to underwrite a falsification model that individual accountability makes intelligible.

Michael Meeuwis, Astrid De Wit & Frank Brisard

Performatives and (im)perfective aspect (lecture)

his paper represents the first (methodological) step in a cross-linguistic study on the relation between performativity and aspect. It starts from the observation that verbs, when used as performatives, are typically inflected with (present) perfective aspect. This can be motivated on the basis of the indexical quality of performatively used verbs: the activity referred to by performatives (such as *I promise to come*) can be said to coincide exactly with the act of referring to it. Thus, we may say that the denoted situation (the speech act of promising) is in fact *constituted* by the speech event (Langacker 2001). As a result, the situation at issue is fully conceptualized at the time of speaking by definition, which would typically trigger perfective aspectual marking: perfective expressions designate situations that are treated as known and closed. Imperfective aspect, in contrast, is associated with construing situations as incomplete and open. For instance, using progressive marking (a kind of imperfective aspect) in an utterance like *I'm promising to come* has the effect of turning it into a mere description of an ongoing event, thereby canceling its performative character.

It is possible, however, that this assumption of a correlation between performativity and perfectivity is biased by a privileging of examples from English, in which performative contexts obligatorily feature the simple present (and the simple present is commonly assumed to have a perfective value; cf. Brinton (1988), Smith (1997: 110-112, 185-186), Williams (2002: 128-166) and De Wit et al. (2013)). However, data from Slavic -- the only language family for which the relation between performativity and aspect has been examined thoroughly (cf. Israeli 2001; Dickey forthcoming) -- indicate an opposite tendency: most Slavic languages, especially from the eastern branch (such as Russian), almost exclusively allow imperfective verbs in performative contexts. Jaggar (2006) furthermore indicates that performative expressions in Hausa trigger both perfective and imperfective marking.

The correlation therefore needs to be checked cross-linguistically, an endeavor that requires a suitable questionnaire offering contexts that are universally accepted as triggering performative uses. Our purpose is to present such a questionnaire and to discuss its methodological potential and limitations. A crucial element will be to elicit and identify performatives without having to resort to aspectual tests, such as in English (present simple vs progressive). By way of a pilot study, we will also offer our first findings based on native speaker elicitations in Lingala, Turkish and Sranan.

Salvio Martín Menéndez

Agentivity: Verb classification from a discursive point of view (lecture)

In this paper, it is proposed to discuss the traditional grammatical verb classification proposed by Systemic-Functional Linguistics (Halliday y Mathiessen 2004) in order to reformulate it from a pragmatic-discursive point of view (Verschuere 1999; Menéndez 2005).

In order to achieve it a principle of graduality will be postulated. This principle recognizes two poles [+/- concrete] that enter in combination with: a) semantic features of the types of verbs (+/- material, +/- mental-sensing, +/-relational) hierarchically ordered, and b) degree of agentivity involved (+/-agent, +/- executioner) that enters in relation with register (Halliday 1978) and genre (Bajtin 1944; Martin and Rose 2005). So our proposal can be summed up as follows: