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Pragmatic traits of Italian sentence adverbs in context

Friday, December 15, 2023, 12:15 AM

Introduction: Dr. Marta Lupica Spagnolo

University of Potsdam, Campus Neues Palais, Room: 1.02.0.15

The event will also be transmitted via Zoom

Abstract:

Sentence Adverbs semantically contribute to the sentence in which they occur in various ways. They can modify the event denoted (*John travels <u>rarely</u>*), the propositional content (*<u>Hopefully</u>, John will travel*), or the speech act of the associated utterance (*<u>Frankly</u>, John should travel more*). They have been classified following these peculiar semantic functions (see, e.g., Dik et al. 1990); however, not all the forms can be placed into specific subclasses (see, a.o., Ramat/Ricca 1998).

In our colloquium, I will introduce two ongoing studies on Italian borderline cases: the functional class of domain adverbs and the lexeme *davvero* 'really'. Domain adverbs can be considered a borderline case in that they have been variably classified as modifying the propositional content or the speech act; while *davvero* can be identified both as an intensifier (*davvero bello* 'really beautiful') or as a modal adverb (*Mi piace davvero John* 'I really like John'). These hybrid syntactic and semantic behaviours have consequences on the use of these sentence adverbs, corresponding to peculiar pragmatic traits variably interacting with the context. In particular, as far as domain adverbs are concerned, I will show that their peculiar syntactic, informational and semantic traits interact with pragmatic discourse functions (Cimmino in prep.). These correlations will be exemplified in online journalistic texts. As for *davvero*, I will focus on its pragmatic contribution to spoken and written texts. I will show that in persuasive contexts, such as political speeches, online political debated and advertising, it can trigger polemic implicit contents (Cimmino/Cominetti 2023).

Cimmino, Doriana (in prep.). The framing function of domain adverbs. A contrastive study on Italian and English.

Cimmino, Doriana, Cominetti, Federica (2023). Italian *davvero* as a trigger of implicit contents in persuasive discourse. *Journal of Pragmatics* 211(4), 84-95.

Dik, Simon C. et al. (1990). The hierarchical structure of the clause and the typology of satellites, in Jan Nuyts et al. (Eds*): Layers and levels of representation in language theory*. Benjamins, Amsterdam.

Ramat, Paolo, Ricca, Davide (1998). Sentence adverbs in the languages of Europe, in van der Auwera, J. (Ed.), *Adverbial Constructions in the Languages of Europe*. De Gruyter, Berlin.