28.03.19

Noa Peled
Tel Aviv University

Representation and Learning of Quantificational Determiners

Quantificational determiners (Q-dets; e.g., ‘every’, ‘some’, ‘five’ in English) pose a representational challenge for the linguist, and a learning challenge for the child. We discuss these challenges, using semantic automata (SA; van Benthem, 1986) as a concrete representation of reference, and provide a learner that induces appropriate Q-det denotations, based on the principle of Minimum Description Length (MDL; Rissanen, 1978). Moreover, we note a way in which this response to the learning challenge allows us to probe the representational challenge: While SA and a competing representational framework that we refer to as building blocks (BB, where the denotations of Q-dets are represented using a set of primitive determiners and their combinations; cf. Keenan and Stavi, 1986) often make similar predictions about adult judgments, they make divergent predictions about the course of acquisition. We evaluate these predictions in view of recent experimental work by Chemla et al (2018) and find a tentative argument in favor of BB and against SA.

14.03.19

David Erschler
Ben-Gurion University

On Timing of Ellipsis: Evidence from Parasitic Deletion Processes

In current derivational approaches to ellipsis, it is fairly standard to assume that ellipsis is licensed in narrow syntax and targets constituents, while actual deletion of structure occurs at the PF, that is, the post-syntactic stage of derivation (Chomsky, 1995; Merchant, 2001; Aelbrecht, 2010; Lipták & Griffiths, 2014; Weir, 2014; Thoms, 2015; Abe, 2015; Ott & Struckmeier, 2018). With an increasingly complex picture of post-syntactic derivation emerging (Arregi & Nevins, 2012, and references there), it makes sense to try and find the appropriate ordering of deletion with respect to these other post-syntactic rules.

An (2016) has recently shown that deletion can reach into the material adjacent to the ellipsis site and, as an effect of this, delete a fragment of the sentence that does not form a syntactic constituent. He called such a phenomenon parasitic deletion. Specifically, he addressed fragment answer formation in Korean.

In this talk, I will introduce a hitherto undescribed ellipsis variety I have found so far in a number of head-final languages, including Eastern
Armenian, Digor and Iron Ossetic, and Turkish. I will argue that this ellipsis variety also involves parasitic deletion rather than mere deletion of a constituent. I will proceed to argue that the existence of parasitic deletion allows us to more precisely pinpoint the ordering of deletion among the various Phonological Form rules. Specifically, deletion must occur after linearization, and target contiguous strings.

07.03.19

Renate Raffelsiefen
Institute for German Language, Mannheim

**Allomorphy and Abstractness: Empirical Considerations**

The original concept of allomorphy envisioned by Structuralists was based on phonemic distinctness, resulting in the assumption of separate allomorphs also in cases of highly regular alternations. Rejecting a phonemic level of representation altogether, Generativists abandoned this approach, focusing their efforts on minimizing allomorphy by way of deriving surface variants from a single underlying representation whenever they saw grounds for motivating relevant rules. That approach has been deemed superior not only because of yielding a more parsimonious lexicon, but also because of not being plagued by missed generalizations due to non-mentioning of the rules in question.

In my presentation I will, however, take issue with this view and argue for the original approach to allomorphy based on phonemic distinctness. The arguments concern generalizations which require reference specifically to the phonemic level of abstractness, including the following:

- Phonological optimization as a conditioning factor for stable allomorphy in affixes or function words, both in "regular" and in "suppletive" cases;
- Syncretism patterns;
- Iconocity (correlations between morphological and phonological markedness in stem allomorphy);
- Systematic loss of stem allomorphs (due to violation of some phonological markedness constraint)

28.02.19

Rama Novogrodsky
University of Haifa

**The Interface between Syntax and Theory of Mind in Pronoun Use of Children with Autism**

Children with High Functioning Autism (HFA) show deficit in linguistic abilities involving perspective-taking and pragmatic judgments (Baron-Cohen, Leslie, & Frith, 1985). In line with this assumption, many studies showed a relationship between deficit in pronoun production and deficit in Theory-of-Mind capacity among children with autism (e.g., Fay, 1979; Hale...
& Tager-Flusberg, 2005; Novogrodsky, 2013; Rumpf, Kamp-Becker, Becker, & Kauschke, 2012). In this talk I will present findings from a sentence elicitation task of children with HFA. Based on syntactic measures, Theory-of-Mind scores and type of errors in the pronoun elicitation task, the syntactic deficit in children with HFA disorder will be discussed.