

LINGUISTISCHES KOLLOQUIUM

SoSe

2018

18.00 – 20.00 c.t. | WST-C.02.12

10.07.18

HERMAN BEYER, BERNHARD FISSENI (WINDHOEK, DUISBURG-ESSEN)

Partikeln sind halt schwierig – Ja, daaroor moet ons mos nog praat. Towards a unified description of Afrikaans and German particles

Some languages such as Ancient Greek, Dutch, German or Afrikaans have so-called modal particles. These constitute a notorious problem for linguists because they seem to express an attitude towards the proposition of utterances or even the appropriateness of an utterance act rather than simple truth-conditional semantics. Many or all of these particles also have truth-conditional 'homonyms' in other parts of speech.

There is no general agreement on a semantico-pragmatic model for modal particles and no general methodology for comparing such particles. We aim to develop such a methodology and semantico-pragmatic model drawing on unlinguistic research on particles, and common ground in general (Helbig 1990, studies e.g. by Hentschel and Weydt or Thurmair for Ger-man or Conradie for Afrikaans; Döring and Repp to appear). We also draw on research comparing Dutch and German modal particles such as Foolen (2003).

We present research comparing German and Afrikaans words that can be used as modal particles, focussing on such particles that are taken to refer to shared knowledge between interlocutors (cf. Helbig 1990; Sekiguchi 1977; Pittner 2007; Conradie 1995). These signal either (a) that the proposition of the utterance is or should be already part of the propositional common ground (German ja, doch, Afrikaans tog), even if this may have been forgotten or the interlocutor has just presented conflicting information (German doch, Afrikaans tog) or (b) that there is some form of solidarity or agreement with respect to utterance relevance between the speakers (e.g. Afrikaans mos). While the two criteria may appear unrelated, us-age conditions for the particles overlap significantly, and especially cross-linguistically, further research on implicatures is necessary to determine translation equivalents (or lack thereof).

Empirically, for such a study it is necessary to use different methodologies: While linguistic literature and dictionaries can get one started, corpus analysis, experimental techniques (elicitation, acceptability judgements) are necessary. While we focus on a small set of modal particles and specifically the modal component of the respective particles, cross-linguistic research necessitates a greater context of the whole lexeme including homonyms and neighbouring particles such as German halt, eben or Afrikaans dan.

References

Conradie, C. Jac. 1995. "Die partikel mos: 'n Semantiese verkennig." *South African Journal of Linguistics* November 1995

(Supplement 28): 45–55.

Döring, Sophia, and Sophie Repp, to appear. "The Modal Particles Ja and Doch and their Interaction with Discourse Structure: Corpus and Experimental Evidence." In *Information Structure and Semantic Processing*, edited by Sam Featherston, Robin Hörnig, Sophie von Wietersheim, and Susanne Winkler. Berlin: de Gruyter.

Foolen, Ad. 2003. "Niederländisch toch und deutsch doch: gleich oder doch nicht ganz?" *Linguistik Online* 13 (1): 85–102. Helbig, Gerhard. 1990. *Lexikon deutscher Partikeln*. Leipzig: Verlag Enzyklopädie Leipzig.

Pittner, Karin. 2007. "Common ground in Interaction: the functions of medial doch in Ger-man." In *Lexical Markers of Common Grounds*, edited by Anita Fetzer and Kerstin Fischer, 67–87. Amsterdam: Elsevier.

Sekiguchi, Tsugio. 1977. "Was heißt ‚doch‘? eingeleitet und übersetzt von Konnosuke Eza-wa." In *Aspekte der Modalpartikeln*, edited by Harald Weydt, 3–9. Tübingen: Niemeyer.

Fakultät für Geisteswissenschaften,
Institut für Germanistik

M. Beißwenger * U. Haß * M. Morek *
B. Schröder * E. Ziegler

UNIVERSITÄT
DUISBURG
ESSEN

Offen im Denken