

Discourse particles: Incremental specification in context

Elena Karagjosova

In the first part of the talk, I will present an ongoing large-scale project that examines the discourse properties which control the interpretation of discourse particles. This issue is pursued by looking at the distribution and interpretation of discourse particles in the so-called *Nacherstposition* in German. *Nacherstposition* is the position immediately following the first constituent in a matrix clause. It is generally assumed that the presence of discourse particles in this position is, amongst others, accompanied by a topic shift effect. We intend to develop a semantic and pragmatic model for the interpretation of particles in *Nacherstposition*, thereby analysing the interpretation of discourse particles as a process of incremental specification in context emanating from underspecified representations. In the second part of the talk I will focus on the German discourse particle "nämlich" and present some initial thoughts on the discourse relations that it may mark and the role of information structure in specifying these relations.