A1: Incremental Specification of Givenness and Focus in a Discourse Context – *Annotating Contrast*

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SFB 732 “Incremental Specification in Context”
Klausurtagung Blaubeuren

Main goals

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- Develop a precise and detailed classification of information structural categories, annotate them and determine their fine-grained phonological and phonetic properties.
- Determine the interface areas between information structure and prosody.
- Release the semantic-phonetic corpus.
Achievements – semantics

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- Information Status annotations of radio news corpus (ca. 3500 sentences) and smaller texts
- Enables for the first time investigations into the prosody of information status “in the wildlife.”
- Integrated a broad range of semantic-syntactic phenomena into IS annotation (anaphora, accommodation, bridging, coreference, genericity, relative clauses etc.) (Riester 2008a,b,c)
Further achievements

- Developed tools and scripts for querying, corpus processing and matching between semantic and phonetic annotations
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- Phonological and phonetic results (→ Kati)
- Studies on the effect of information status on generation ranking in LFG (Cahill & Riester, in progress), A1-D2
## Category inventory

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>category</th>
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</table>
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Dimensions of Contrast

Contrast Dimensions

- **Intra-sentential** – cross-sentential
- **Size of the contrasted constituents** (from words (and even below) to entire sentences)
- **Explicit** – implicit

(1) Zu dem Protest aufgerufen hatten Umweltschützer und Kulturvertreter.

'It was environmentalists and art representatives who had initiated the protests.'

(2) Bislang dürfen die Einwohner allerdings nur über die Mitglieder des Wahl-Komitees befinden.

'Up to now, the inhabitants only have the right to decide on the members of the election committee.'
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(3) Zu dem Protest aufgerufen hatten Umweltschützer und Kulturvertreter.

'It was environmentalists and art representatives who had initiated the protests.'

(4) Dem Angeklagten wurde vorgeworfen, er habe nicht nur die Anweisungen der Beamten ignoriert, sondern diese zusätzlich noch beleidigt.

'The defendant was accused of not only having ignored the police officers’ instructions but to even insulting them.'
While European allies have closed ranks behind the United States in the latest showdown with Iraqi President Saddam Hussein, there are lingering apprehensions among NATO governments about the Clinton administration's insistence on recognizing the spread of nuclear, biological and chemical weapons as the alliance's most urgent priority.
Deciding on cross-clausal contrastive relations

(5) While European allies have closed ranks behind the Unites States in the latest showdown with Iraqi President Saddam Hussein, there are lingering apprehensions among NATO governments about the Clinton administration’s insistence on recognizing the spread of nuclear, biological and chemical weapons as the alliance’s most urgent priority.
Asher & Lascarides (2003), Reese et al. (2007): “Contrast(\(\alpha, \beta\)) – where \(\alpha\) and \(\beta\) are elementary discourse units – holds when \(\alpha\) and \(\beta\) have similar semantic structures, but contrasting themes, i.e. sentence topics, or when one constituent negates a default consequence of the other.”
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(6) a. While European allies have closed ranks behind the Unites States in the latest showdown with Iraqi President Saddam Hussein,

b. there are lingering apprehensions among NATO governments about the Clinton administration’s insistence on recognizing the spread of nuclear, biological and chemical weapons as the alliance’s most urgent priority.
Parallel [coordinating, veridical]

“Parallel(α, β) has the same structural requirements as Contrast, but instead requires α and β to share a common theme. Cue phrases such as too and also are good indicators of Parallel.

(7)  a. The United Telegraph Worker’s union represents 4,400 Western Union employees around the country.
    b. The Communication Workers of America represents 300 company employees in New York City.
Conclusion

New set of data can be investigated using the same tools and techniques, which are already available.