Area B

Meaning and disambiguation at the interface between words and phrases
Area B

- Currently planned for phase III:
- B1 (Alexiadou): The formation and interpretation of derived nominals
- B4 (Roßdeutscher/Kamp): Lexikalische Information im Kontext von Wortbildung, Satz und Diskurs
- B5 (Stein): Polysemy in a conceptual system
- B6 (Alexiadou): Underspecification in Voice systems
- B7 (Marzo): Konversion zwischen Lexikon und Syntax
Meaning and disambiguation at the interface between words and phrases

- Main concerns in area B: determine the building blocks of word meaning; formulate and formalize algorithms of disambiguation thereof in context.
- **Empirical domains**: nominalization, different conversion types, argument alternations related to
- Voice (active, passive, middle, etc.),
- particles, prepositions, particle- and prefix verbs,
- event entailments.
- **Using various methods**: introspection, corpora, lexical resources, and experimental verification of hypotheses, cross-linguistic perspective.
Meaning and disambiguation at the interface between words and phrases

- All projects work on processes that involve category change (e.g. nominalization, de-adjectival verbs)
- Part of our research in phase II focused on the issue of preservation of argument structure realization under category change and complex word formation, associated with particular readings of the nominal/adjective only.
- Another part focused on other factors such as outer Aspect, modality, and how they trigger particular interpretations of the verbal element/nominalization.
- Several co-operations within projects (culminating in various joint presentations/publications).
Relationships between representations

- In the B-area, we have been identifying the pieces necessary to build word meaning.
- We have been also working on very local relationships between representations (e.g. syntax-morphology, syntax-semantics, syntax-lexicon)
- What we want to do in phase III is to offer:
  1. a model of the interfaces between morpho-syntax, semantics and linguistic ontology, and
  2. a model of parallel structural relations between V, N, A, and P domains building on our work from phases I and II (parallelism hypothesis).
Relationships among projects & levels

- A model of the interface between morpho-syntax, semantics, and linguistic ontology.

- a. We will continue our work on the interface between morpho-syntax, and semantics.
- b. We will expand our work to include the interface between semantics, and linguistic ontology.

- As we are interested in the interaction between (i) and (ii), all projects will work in close co-operation.
Empirical domain

- non-standard, less well-behaved data:
- Diachronic work packages in B5 and B7
- Compounds in B1 (compositionality)
- Psych verbs in B6 (these verbs are grammatically special (see Landau 2010): non-uniform across languages; ambiguity with Object-experiencer verbs (e.g. surprise: agentive vs. causative); special case of the causative alternation; recent –corpus and experimental- work suggesting that agentivity is underspecified with these verbs in English and arises from processes of pragmatic enrichment (Grafmiller 2012, Stanford))
- Borderline cases of semantic acceptability in B4
  - *ung* nominals from unergative verbs
  - ad hoc particle and prefix verbs