PRESENTATION/APRESENTAÇÃO

The organizers of this special issue of the Journal Linguagem em (Dis)curso (Language in (Dis)course) are proud to present to the academic community a set of nine studies in relevance-theoretic cognitive pragmatics. Relevance theory has proved to be one of the most promising lines of research for describing and explaining communication phenomena. Both the cognitive and communicative principles of relevance have been efficient to deal with complex inferential issues, ranging from the interpretation of oral or written texts to the interpretation of varied coded inputs such as images, nonverbal communication or multimodal arrangements, from off-line to on-line communication, from lexical to discursive matters, and so on. *Relevance: challenges and perspectives* is proof of the strength of this architecture, and every text here, including the more critical ones, acknowledges the value of the model.

In the first paper, *Can pictures have explicatures?*, Charles Forceville (Universiteit van Amsterdam, Netherlands) and Billy Clark (Middlesex University, England) evaluate whether pictures can be understood to yield explicit meanings ('explicatures' in relevance-theoretic terms) or not, defying the view in which 'explicature' seems to exclude this possibility apart from cases where pictures include or are accompanied by linguistic coded meanings. Forceville and Clark claim that the explicature-implicature distinction is relevant to the analysis of pictures without such elements, because some assumptions communicated by pictures seem to be more 'explicature-like' than others. According to them, this question is not merely terminological as the discussion leads to a fuller understanding of ways in which pictures communicate information.

In the second paper, *What words mean is a matter of what people mean by them*, Tim Wharton (University of Brighton, England) analyses the extent to which lexical acquisition is an exercise of an associationist ability, a general mind-reading ability or a specifically pragmatic ability. Wharton pays particular attention to the role played by natural communicative phenomena in word-learning, including gaze direction, facial expression, tone of voice etc., and addresses the question of how a pragmatic theory might accommodate them. He sketches some possible future research directions into the pragmatics of lexical acquisition, and suggests, considering recent research in relevance-theoretic lexical pragmatics, that there are interesting parallels to be drawn between the processes at work in lexical acquisition and those at work in adult comprehension.

In the third paper, *Relevance theory and metaphor*, Esther Romero and Belén Soria (University of Granada, Spain) show the evolution of the relevance-theoretic account of metaphor, and challenge its deflationary account as loosening in a continuum. They claim that, in current relevance theory, loose uses not only convey implicatures but also explicatures in which *ad hoc* concepts appear. *Ad hoc* concepts, in the case of metaphor, cause the emergent property issue, which is solved by taking into account that a loose use may entail further loosening of the conceptual features.

According to them, this view implies that the most creative cases of metaphor can only be explaining by resorting to a different interpretation route. As this theoretical position creates new problems, Romero and Soria argue that metaphorical interpretation can be better explained by resorting to metaphorical *ad hoc* concepts that result from a partial mapping from one conceptual domain onto another.

In the fourth paper, *Not all emoticons are created equal*, Francisco Yus (University of Alicante, Spain) analyses emoticons from a pragmatic, relevance-theoretic perspective. He determines the extent to which emoticons contribute to the eventual relevance of the information communicated by the text typed on the keyboard. Yus proposes eight pragmatic functions, which correspond to the different ways in which emoticons satisfy the user's search for relevance. The author addresses how emoticons contribute to a more fine-grained identification of the user's attitudes, feelings and emotions, which are often difficult to identify in text-based communication.

In the fifth paper, *Inferences in advertisements: exemplifying with relevance theory*, Jane Rita Caetano da Silveira and Ana Maria Tramunt Ibaños (Pontifical Catholic University of Rio Grande do Sul, Brazil) analyse advertisements which exhibit combinations of verbal and visual elements through relevance theory, specifically in terms of what triggers inferential comprehension in such pieces. The authors analyse three examples that are not characterized by selling marketing products, but ideas that become ostensive by means of merging visual and linguistic inputs to inferential understanding of what they mean.

In the sixth paper, *The communicative relevance in fictional discourse*, Elena Godoy and Rodrigo Bueno Ferreira (Federal University of Paraná, Brazil) discuss two programmatic questions about the logic of fictional discourse made by Searle (1975): why evolution would have selected fiction as a cross-cultural behaviour and what enables an author to use words literally without committing to their literal meanings in fictional communication. According to these authors, part of the problem lies on a Searle's conception that, by violating the logical rules of assertive sentences, the fictional communication constitutes itself as parasitic ordinary language. In this way, Godoy and Ferreira discuss the fictional model of communication in relevance-theoretic terms, showing that ordinary communication and fictional discourse are second-order representations or metarepresentations.

In the seventh paper, *The mechanism of humour under relevance-theoretic perspective*, Sídnei Cursino-Guimarães (Brazil) presents a model to explain the mechanism of humour, combining the concept of bisociation, as proposed by Koestler (1964), with both the cognitive and the communicative principles of relevance, as proposed by Sperber and Wilson (1986/1995). Cursino-Guimarães suggests that the development of humour occurs by a recourse to bisociation, which, in turn, is reflected by the junction of an enthymeme and a paradox. In order to interpret the result of the blending of these logical procedures in some jokes, she develops an analysis based on the relevance-theoretic comprehension procedure, and proposes the concept of *paradoxical implicated conclusion*.

In the eighth paper, *Inferences and interfaces: validity and relevance*, Jorge Campos da Costa and Claudia Strey (Pontifical Catholic University of Rio Grande do Sul, Brazil) consider that the Ancient Greeks, since the sophists' texts represented threats to legitimate reasoning anchored in the notion of truth, tried to examine the relationship among valid, informal and fallacious arguments. Aristotle distinguished mainly formal ways of abstractions from the daily practical uses, addressing the relationships between the logical forms and the interferences of content. Motivated by these insights, the authors investigate some problems concerning logical operators, relations of sense, probability, entailment and their properties in natural language, constituted as inferences in the logical-cognitive-communicative interface. For that, foundations of classical, propositional logic are brought closer together with the ones from semantics, pragmatics and what they call "an inspiring notion of relevance."

Finally, in the ninth paper, *For a goal conciliation theory: ante-factual abductive hypotheses and proactive modelling*, Fábio José Rauen (University of Southern Santa Catarina, Brazil) outlines what he calls a *goal conciliation theory*. Based on relevance theory, goal conciliation theory is designed to describe and explain the formulation and the evaluation of ante-factual abductive hypotheses in proactive contexts, assuming that the individual produces an inference to the best solution in these cases. The author presents this conceptual architecture in four stages—goal designing, and hypothesis formulation, execution and checking—illustrating it with an example in which an individual intends to open his own locked front door. Based on this architecture, Rauen evaluates what he calls a goal self and hetero-conciliation processes in contexts of categorical, biconditional, conditional, enabling, and tautological ante-factual abductive hypotheses.

Once the texts were presented, is our desire that these studies can inspire new challenges and promote new future perspectives in cognitive pragmatics. We hope that the reader will have all a nice and profitable reading.

Fábio José Rauen
Francisco Yus Ramos
Jorge Campos da Costa
Organizers