ARBEITSGRUPPE 5 | *WORKSHOP 5*

Raum | *Room*: S 13, Seminargebäude

Linguistic aspects of fictionality

Luisa Gödeke[1] & Sonja Zeman[2]
[1]Georg-August-Universität Göttingen, [2]Ludwig-Maximilians-Universität München
luisa.goedeke@uni-goettingen.de, Sonja.Zeman@lmu.de

Human language not only serves the purpose of speaking about facts in the real world, but is also widely used to talk about hypothetical and fictional scenarios. Fictional discourse has always posed pressing questions about the reference status of fictive entities and proper names, the speech act involved in fictional storytelling, and the relation between fiction, imagination and other forms of hypothetical discourse. Recently, new interest in discourse and register studies has put fictionality in the spotlight, as it has been shown that fictional discourse is affecting core grammatical entities like temporal and local deictics, tense, personal pronouns and modality (see Maier & Altshuler 2021). In this sense, fictionality has more than one dimension: It can reflect upon (i) the ontological status of its referent (e.g. the status of a referent like a unicorn in the real world), (ii) the fictional discourse within a (fictional or non-fictional) text (in tradition of Hamburger 1957), and (iii) the idea of a certain fictional speech act (Searle 1975).

As such, fictional language use takes center stage in many different areas of linguistics: Philosophy of language, (formal) semantics, pragmatics, grammar, register and discourse studies, text linguistics, corpus linguistics, etc. In our workshop, we want to bring together researchers working from different perspectives and backgrounds in order to stake out the relationship between fictional discourse and linguistics and calibrate this new emerging field. We are particularly interested in, but not restricted to the following questions:

- How can we define fictionality in linguistic terms? What are the margins to other forms of hypothetical discourse (e.g. dreams, counterfactuals, ...)?
- What is the relationship between fictionality and grammar?
- How can we annotate fictional passages in corpora?
- What are the cognitive prerequisites for fictionality (displacement / decoupling)?
- What can linguists learn from concepts of fictionality in narratology and literary studies?

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Fictional import

Daniel Gutzmann[1] & Katharina Turgay[2]
[1]Ruhr-Universität Bochum, [2]Universität Landau
daniel.gutzmann@rub.de, turgay@uni-landau.de

One approach to the analysis of fiction is to assume that the propositions that make up a work of fiction are accepted into an “unofficial” common ground in which the fictional propositions are accepted. In this talk, we will outline the shortcomings of this approach which all are based on the observation that the common ground of fictional work and the ordinary, reality-based common ground can import propositions from each other. We will discuss four kinds of imports and sketch a formal modelling by using multiple common grounds and indexed propositions.

1) Reality to fiction: Fictional work is not built completely from the propositions that are expressed and implied by the sentences that make up that work, but imports propositions from the ordinary common ground. For instance, that one cannot travel faster than light or that vampires do not exist. Similarly, if there is reference to places or persons that also exist in the real world, many properties of these entities are imported into the fictional common ground as well.

2) Fiction to fiction: Fiction does not build just on reality; it can also import propositions from other fictional common grounds. For instance, if a fictional work mentions vampires, we can import many propositions from other fictional work (that they are undead or that they need blood).

3) Fiction to reality: We can also import content from fiction into the reality-based common ground. That is, for instance, necessary, if we want to talk about the impact of fictional objects on objects in the real world. For instance, when we say: “The vampires in movie A scare me; I don't even want to think about them".

4) Enacting fiction: This interaction has, to our knowledge, not been discussed before. In fiction that is created by acting (especially in movies, but also in audio plays), many properties by the “enacting object” are imported as properties of the “enacted object”. For instance, many properties of the actor Harrison Ford are imported as properties of the character Han Solo into the fictional common ground (for instance, how tall he is or what kind of eyes or nose he has).

Theoretical modeling: We will model importing propositions by splitting the notion of common ground into multiple common grounds (an official common ground and unofficial common grounds for each work of fiction). Propositions can be imported from one common ground to another, constrained by pragmatic rules about inferences between them. Crucially, imported propositions must be indexed for its source, because imported propositions can be deleted from a common ground if conflicting propositions are added to the fictional common ground (e.g. if the proposition is added that vampires feed from broccoli instead of blood).

Implicature and Implicit Truth in Fiction

Nils Franzén
Umeå University
nils.franzen@umu.se

Consider the first sentence in Tolkien's Bilbo:

(1) In a hole in the ground there lived a hobbit.

By writing this, Tolkien made it true in the fiction that there lived a hobbit in a hole in the ground. The concept of truth in fiction has received considerable attention in the last 40 years. In particular, the conditions under which something is true in a fiction have been extensively debated. To illustrate, it seems clear enough that an author can make (1) true in the fiction simply by saying so. However, we also take facts that have never been explicitly mentioned by the author to obtain in the fiction, for instance, that Sherlock Holmes does not have a third nostril and that he has not had a case where the culprit was a purple gnome (Lewis 1978, 41).

There are two main approaches to such examples. First, there is the Reality Principle, famously advocated by Lewis (1978), according to which implicit story truths are generated by means of counterfactuality. What is implicitly true in a fiction is what would have been the case if everything that the author says was true. On the second approach, what is implicitly true in a fiction is established by what the author intends the reader to imagine (eg. Currie 1990).

I explore an alternative to these views, according to which all or at least many implicit story truths are generated by conversational implicature. The basic observation is that many examples of implicit story truths are such things that we would infer about the described situation also when the description amounted to regular assertion rather than fiction-making. Had the Sherlock Holmes stories been asserted as something that really had happened, the readers would similarly have assumed that Sherlock Holmes did not have a third nostril. I suggest that examples like this can be accounted for by Levinson's (2000) notion of "stereotypical inference", i.e., inference based on the heuristic "what is simply described is stereotypically exemplified". The mere fact that Doyle fails to mention any deviant characteristics of Holmes' appearance implicates that there are no such deviances.

I furthermore discuss an objection to the account, claiming that since the author is not asserting in the course of writing fiction, she can not be implicating anything.

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Discourse Reference and Fictional Names

Andreas Stokke
Uppsala University
andreas.stokke@filosofi.uu.se

This paper argues that fictional names, like "Anna Karenina" or "Sancho Panza," are variables associated with presuppositions that constrain the relevant assignment of values. Particularly, fictional names presuppose that their assigned value is the unique occupant of the role that constitutes the relevant character.

A role is a set of properties determined by a fictional story (Wolterstorff 1980, Currie 1990, Stokke 2021, Glavaničová 2021). Roughly, Tolstoy's Anna Karenina determined the set of properties {is called "Anna Karenina," is Russian, is a countess, is married to Karenin, is the sister of Oblonsky, ...}. This set of properties is a role that an individual can occupy at a particular world. Someone who uniquely has all the Anna Karenina properties at a world w is the unique Anna Karenina occupant at w.

I suggest that a role be understood as the information associated with a particular discourse referent by the relevant text. I show that this theory provides a unified semantics and pragmatics for a range of uses of fictional names. For instance, (1) can be uttered fictionally, to tell a fictional story.

(1) Anna Karenina was a countess.

Second, (1) can be uttered assertorically by someone who confusedly puts forward as an assertion about how things actually are. Third, (1) can be used to say something about what happens in Anna Karenina. On the account I propose, "Anna Karenina" has the same semantic meaning on all of these. In particular, the account integrates the way names function within fiction to build up discourse information, and thereby roles, with their semantics on uses outside fiction, such as metafiction, and assertions. The paper also examines some other uses of fictional names.

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The semantics of first person narration in literary fiction: Splitting the deictic center

Teresa Flera
University of Warsaw
t.flera@uw.edu.pl

An issue often overlooked in semantic considerations of literary fiction is the reference of deictic and indexical expressions. Deixis is a property of language that allows expressions to "point at" relevant features of the context (Levinson, 2004). Within this category, there is a class of expressions called indexicals (Kaplan, 1979), which fix their reference directly to the deictic center.

I focus on first person narration. The problem it poses for fictional discourse is that the Kaplanian approach does not allow to differentiate between an author and a narrator in fictional discourse. The difference between an autobiography and a work of fiction is that one is true, while the other one is false or pretend-true (Walton, 1990; Currie, 1990). On the other hand, the solution that is proposed by proponents of "indexical shift" is to allow indexicals to fix the deictic center inside the fictional narrative (Predelli, 2008; Vecsey, 2015). This solution would erase the author along with the actual circumstances in which the piece of fiction originated from the analysis of the discourse.

The solution I propose is deictic center split, which occurs when the desired reference of an indexical does not appear to match its appropriate relation to the deictic center. I opt for allowing each coordinate in the deictic center to encompass multiple roles that can be filled by multiple referents for a specific utterance. For example, the "agent" coordinate inside the deictic center may manifest in an utterance as either an author or a narrator of a given speech act. When someone utters a statement in first person that is meant to be interpreted as narrated by a different entity, the agent coordinate of the deictic center may split to accommodate both of these entities.

This analysis ensures that both the author and narrator are included in the deictic features of a piece of fiction, proposes a mechanism for deixis in fiction, and provides a new framework for explicating some of the consequences of the use of deixis inside literary fiction.

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The availability of protagonists as perspectival centers for Free Indirect Discourse in the context of narrated texts by a perspectivally prominent narrator

Stefan Hinterwimmer[1], Christopher Saure[1] & Anna-Pia Jordan-Bertinelli[2]
[1]Bergische Universität Wuppertal, [2]University of Witwatersrand
hinterwimmer@uni-wuppertal.de, c.saure@uni-wuppertal.de,
ap.jordan-bertinelli@posteo.de

We present the results of several experiments investigating the effect of different narrative situations on the availability of locally prominent protagonists as anchor for Free Indirect Discourse (FID). FID relies on its content, context and certain linguistic cues for its interpretation and is dependent on having a prominent protagonist in the preceding discourse to function as its perspectival anchor. Although the narrator may be prominent on a global level, a protagonist can become prominent locally, with respect to a single sentence or text segment. According to Zeman (2020), this feature of narrative texts installs them with a potential for multiperspectivity absent from everyday conversation. In order to gain a deeper understanding of the influence the narrator's perspectival prominence has on the availability of protagonists as perspective takers, we conducted an acceptability rating study and created items in three conditions:

Condition A featured a neutral third-person narrator, condition B a homodiegetic first-person narrator and condition C a prominent, evaluative third-person narrator. All items ended with FID from a locally prominent protagonist's point of view. Participants had to rate the acceptability of the FID sentence on a scale from 1–7. Condition B received significantly lower ratings than the other two conditions, whereas there was no significant difference between conditions A and C. This indicates that a prominent third-person narrator does not have a strong effect on the protagonists' availability as anchor for FID, while a homodiegetic first-person narrator does. An additional study, in which participants had to choose if the thought expressed by FID belonged to the narrator or the protagonist, proved that there was a strong tendency to choose the protagonist as perspectival center in all three conditions. In a follow-up study we will investigate why first-person narrators strongly affect protagonists' availability as perspectival anchors for FID.

Our experiments so far confirm that locally prominent protagonists can function as potent perspectival anchors for FID even in the context of a globally prominent narrator and provide further evidence that narrative texts indeed possess an inherent potential for multiperspectivity.

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Fictional Contamination or What Literary and Conversational Narratives Share

Jarmila Mildorf
Universität Paderborn
jarmila.mildorf@upb.de

Storytellers in conversational contexts often render original speech situations seemingly verbatim (Tannen 2007); they include other people as 'characters' in their narratives and assign thoughts and emotions to them; they may even tell another person's story altogether (Norrick 2013), regardless of whether they were first-hand witnesses to that person's experiences or not. Furthermore, conversational stories are often embellished and dramatized by means of perspectival shifts (Graumann & Kallmeyer), by creative language use involving figurative speech and playfulness (Carter 2004) or by taking recourse to existing cultural story templates. Although these linguistic and narrative-structural features should raise questions concerning the epistemic status of what is told (Filutowska 2022, Norrick 2020), narratives using them are usually accepted by listeners because their reference to the real world is taken for granted. This is also why such narratives are completely overlooked in fictionality studies.

I argue (Mildorf 2023) that it is precisely such features in conversational stories which, if they were used more extensively, would make these stories come close to generic fiction. Being based on the same storytelling parameters including worldmaking, storyworld disruption, experientiality and situatedness (Herman 2009), literary and conversational narratives share a potential for fictionalization or what I call *fictional contamination*. It is mostly culturally determined pragmatic constraints and generic expectations that prevent conversational stories from becoming more fully fictionalized. In analysing examples from oral history interviews, I demonstrate how seemingly simple anecdotes and stories may come to resemble fictional narratives. The main motivation for storytellers for using stories' fictionalizing potential is their aim to involve listeners and to tell an interesting story.

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Fictionality and language of historical testimony and historical representation

Katarzyna Filutowska
University of Humanities and Economics in Łódź
katarzyna.filutowska@gmail.com, katarzyna.filutowska@ahe.email

According to Searle (1975), true statements refer to the real world while fictional statements refer to the world presented in a given text, and therefore they are neither true nor false. However, such approach seems to be problematic in case of historical discourse which by definition tells the truth about the past, yet at the same time it refers to a reality which no longer exists in the moment when the statement is formulated. Therefore, some thinkers propose to consider historical statements beyond the classical oppositions of truth-and-falsehood/fiction. For instance, Ankersmit (2002) distinguishes between: a) language which performs a typically cognitive function, as it connects words and things and b) language which does not refer to reality but only replaces some (past) reality, as in the case of historical discourse which functions as a sort of aesthetical representation which is expressed in narrative substances or Nss (Ankersmit 2002; 1983). Thus, there is not a great difference between historiography and a historical novel written by a professional historian, which is a practical application of historical knowledge.

Yet, there is still a difference between an “official” narrative concerning the past and the first-person testimony of a witness of historical occurrences. While historical discourse has a typically narrative character, testimonies are usually formulated in the reflexive voice, which is characteristic for modernistic novels in which occurrences are less important than the personal experience of the narrating subject (Ankersmit 1997). Referring to Ankersmit’s theory, to H. White’s concept of historical discourse as literature, and to some classical theories of fiction (e.g. Genette 1993, Cohn 2000) I will discuss the relationships between the language of historiography and the language of historical novels on the one hand and the relationships between the language of first person testimony and the language of historical discourse created partially on its basis on the other. I will analyze the most important “signposts of fictionality” in historical truth-telling and examine what in fact lets us distinguish between historical fiction and historical truth.

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Fictionality Meets Narrativity – The (In)Similarity of Event Patterns in Fictional and Non-Fictional Texts by Franz Kafka

Haimo Stiemer & Evelyn Gius
Technische Universität Darmstadt,
stiemer@linglit.tu-darmstadt.de, evelyn.gius@tu-darmstadt.de

What connections between fiction and narrativity can be identified when the latter is operationalised on the basis of the representation of events on the surface of the text and thus by using linguistic units? We will discuss this question using fictional and non-fictional texts by Franz Kafka. The starting point for our study is the observation that events are constitutive for both text types. Events can generally be described as any kind of change of state (Lotman 1972, 232) and all narrative theory models assume that events are transformed into narrative texts through a series of specific processes such as permutation and linearisation (Pier 2003, 84). Most narratological definitions of narrativity, in turn, are based on a series or sequence of events. While the concepts of event and narrativity are of great importance to narratology, there are still only few approaches in computational literary studies that operationalise them for automated analysis procedures. An approach working with linguistic units was devised in the EvENT project, distinguishing between three event types ('Change of state', 'Process events' and 'Stative events') to which different degrees of narrativity were assigned (Vauth & Gius 2021). This was subsequently used to map the narrativity of texts in the text course as narrativity graphs or to model them as plots of these texts (Vauth et al. 2021).

We want to apply the EvENT analysis approach (Hatzel 2022) to different text genres in order to capture the (dis)similarity of narrativity progressions or graphs in the context of fictionality/factuality. For this purpose, we will analyse narrative texts (1), passages from the diaries from the years 1910 to 1923 (2) and letters by Kafka (3). With our comparative analysis it is thus up for discussion to what extent one can approach the phenomenon of fictionality on the discourse level. It remains to be examined whether this opens up a possibility to identify the level of fictionality of texts on an empirical basis. The testing of this possibility can also be productively brought together with the workshop's question about possible relations between fictional discourse and linguistics.

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The commentary of the overt narrator on the edge of fictionality

Anna Mareike Weimer
Universität Göttingen
annamareike.hofmann@uni-goettingen.de

Different perspectives open up new angles to research fictionality status. While certain narrative modes of discourse, namely the dynamic ones such as report or speech reproduction (Bonheim 1975), leave little doubt about their fictional status, it is precisely the static modes that offer room for non-fictional interpretation – this is especially true for literary commentaries, in which often no fictional elements are presented and the narrator is instead open with his more abstract ideas and metafictional additions. This intrusion, which goes beyond a minimum of mediation, is termed overt narrator (Prince 2020).

In this regard, commentaries divide into two groups:

(i) commentaries that contribute information in an abstracting or additive manner and complement the narrated action, and

(ii) commentaries that provide space for interpretation beyond the work through their generalizing structure and context-independence.

It is precisely these commentaries that exemplify the debate conducted on the limits of fictionality of narrative structures. However, they are also markers for the identification of the overt narrator (Chatman 1978). It is significant that the same structures that enable understanding beyond fictional interpretation also serve as markers for explicit mediation by a narrator. What both debates have in common is that they are conducted at those passages marked by a narrative pause.

This contribution presents the results of an investigation of the overt narrator and the temporal markers for its recognition in *Die Unendliche Geschichte* by Michael Ende (1979). This is done especially with regard to how this perspective can contribute to an annotation of the fictional passages.

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Who makes the argument adversative? Competition between narrator and protagonist

Jakob Egetenmeyer
Universität zu Köln
j.egetenmeyer@uni-koeln.de

Research on perspective in narratives shows that information may be allocated to the narrator or the protagonist (Doron 1991; Zeman 2018). The allocation of argumentative orientation (Anscombre & Ducrot 1977) has not yet been investigated thoroughly. We analyze adversatively introduced indirect speech in Spanish (*pero* ('but') + speech verb + indirect speech) as it instantiates the explicit intersection between narrator and protagonist and involves a salient marking of argumentative orientation. There is some discussion on the relative informative weight of the complement-taking clause compared to the subordinate clause (Thompson 2002), but the allocation of both parts to narrator and protagonist is uncontroversial (Declerck 2003). In accordance with syntax, the adversative connector, which precedes the main verb, is expected to indicate the argumentative stance of the narrator. E.g., in (1), the narrator evaluates what the protagonist says. However, as our data show, the argumentative orientation may also be contributed by the protagonist like in (2).

(1) *[D]ijo que [...] tenía que marcharse [...]. [...] claro que volvería;* ***pero dijo*** ***<u>que</u>*** *<u>volvería</u> [...] de una forma que estaba claro que no sabía cuándo iba a volver.* (CREA: Mendicutti 1995, p. 92)
'He said that he had to leave. Of course he would come back; but **he said** **<u>that</u>** <u>he would come back</u> in a way that it was clear that he did not know when he was going to come back.'

(2) *Solana agradeció el ofrecimiento,* ***pero*** *le* ***dijo*** ***<u>que</u>*** *[...] <u>no se planteaba volver a España</u> ya que, aunque hubiera querido, no podía dejar a medias su mandato al frente de la OTAN [...].* (CREA: López Alba 2002, p. 62)
'Solana thanked him for the offer, **but told** him **<u>that</u>** <u>he was not considering returning to Spain</u> because, even if he had wanted to, he could not leave his term at the head of NATO halfway through.'

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Reporting from a Character's Mind – Investigations on the Use of Negated Modals

Ulrike Schneider
Johannes Gutenberg-Universität Mainz
ulrike.schneider@uni-mainz.de

The present study investigates functions of modal negation in fiction. There are indications that negated uses of modals differ functionally from their affirmative counterparts (cf. e.g. Bergs 2008) or, more specifically, that there are prototypical contexts in which we encounter modals combined with negation. To date, this has not been investigated systematically.

One area worth exploring is subjectivity, which Verhagen (2000) defines as a narrative technique, namely the narrator reporting from a character's mind, either directly or indirectly, as illustrated by (1).

(1) He **could not** bring himself to bear the irksome society that surrounded him. (NCF2: 1863)

The present study investigates whether subjectivity in fiction is partially created by means of modal negated verb phrases. The analysis is based on a 1.4-million-word dataset of the core modals *can*, *could*, *shall*, *should*, *will*, *would*, *may*, *might* and *must* as well as the contracted forms *'ll* and *'d*. These were extracted from the fiction corpora in the Chadwyck-Healey collection as well as from the BNC and covers modal use in British prose published between ca. 1500 and 1990.

First results show that authors indeed employ modal negated verb phrases to convey characters' believes, attitudes and inner struggles: *Not*-negation of modals is particularly common with verbs of cognition or communication (e.g. *think*, *know*, *say*, *tell*). Many uses are (semi-)fixed expressions of stance, such as *it might not be* X or *I should not* + verbs of cognition/emotion/communication.

As many of the modal contexts particularly prone to negation are sequences with first-person subjects, further analyses separate between direct speech and the narrative passages surrounding it in order to see whether modal negation plays a specific role, e.g. as a hedging or a discourse-structuring device, within fictional discourse.

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Fiction, speech acts and multimodality: How characters do things with gestures

Andreas H. Jucker[1] & Miriam A. Locher[2]
[1]*University of Zurich,* [2]*University of Basel*
ahjucker@es.uzh.ch, miriam.locher@unibas.ch

When we think of speech acts, we tend to think, as the name implies, of spoken words that perform a certain act. However, in the context of fiction, narrators often refer to the multimodal aspects of speech acts. Apologies, greetings, questions, and so on, are often described as gestures that accompany the verbal act or that perform it silently, as in the following examples (all taken from the fiction section of the *Corpus of Contemporary American English*).

(1) Mrs. Flannery smiled apologetically. "I'm sorry," she whispered.

(2) "Thank you," she said, smiling at him gratefully.

(3) Lily glanced at Jenny, questioning, but the mercenary merely shrugged.

(4) He waved goodbye and sailed across the lake.

In this contribution, we explore a range of pragmatic acts that, in fiction contexts, are regularly described as being performed by gestures. The analysis starts with a corpus search for the collocates of gesture expressions and focuses on those collocates that refer to pragmatic acts. In a second step, representative samples of such collocations are inspected to find out what kind of pragmatic acts are regularly accompanied, or silently performed, by what kind of gestures. The analysis has important implications for a theory of pragmatic acts in general. It suggests that speech acts should be seen from a prototype perspective. While some have a clear illocutionary force and can be clearly identified, others are (accidentally or intentionally) fuzzy and indeterminate, leaving it to the addressee or to discursive negotiations to assign specific illocutionary values to them. At the same time, the analysis has important implications for a pragmatic theory of fiction (see Locher & Jucker 2021; Jucker 2023) because our results suggest that such narrative ascriptions of illocutionary forces to gestures, such as smiling, shrugging, glancing or waving are largely restricted to fictional texts.

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Aesthetic Interpretation

Elin McCready
Aoyama Gakuin University/ZAS
mccready@cl.aoyama.ac.jp

This talk focuses on the language of art, which has had little attention in formal semantics and pragmatics. There is extensive work on truth and interpretation in fiction, which extends the formal semantic toolkit and its concern with language-world connections to the worlds developed within fiction (Lewis 1978, Maier and Stokke 2022). But the main aim of literature is to produce affect in the reader; without a theory of how this works, and what the mechanisms are, we leave out the main point of literary texts. This paper develops a theory of *aesthetic interpretation* which aims at rectifying this situation.

Aesthetic semantics. The main formal tool by which this kind of interpretation is accomplished is a function *A* which assigns affective values to linguistic objects. The full story about how affect is assigned relates to general mechanisms of emotional response and (dis)approval which in turn relate to the associations speakers have with particular words, structures and concepts. The talk separates sources of affect into somatic, ideological and formal sources, where the first involve the body and bodily experience, the second social identities and beliefs, and the third aspects of the form of the literary work. These three sources shape the output of the function *A,* which takes pairs of natural language expresions and their denotations as input.. The result after normalization, for any text, is a real number in the interval [0,1]. A given text is then deemed aesthetically significant if its A-value exceeds a contextually given threshold (Kennedy 2007, McCready 2015). Since A is relativized to individual agents, a given text may be significant for one agent and not another (Barthes 1977).

Aesthetic pragmatics. The talk gives several examples of how different settings of A can give different interpretations for different agents on the assumption that affect is able to influence pragmatic choice in cases of underspecification and ambiguity (McCready 2012), and then turns to giving a pragmatics for literary texts stated in terms of the semantics so far, together with notions of cooperation and trust for this domain taking as starting point the theory trust in repeated games of McCready 2015 together with recent work in aesthetics by Nguyen (2021).

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Grammar lost in translation: A garden path in Christie's *Murder is Easy*

Liliane Haegemann
Ghent University, Dialing
Liliane.Haegeman@Ugent.be

Agatha Christie's detective stories are essentially of the 'whodunnit' genre, starting with one or more crimes (usually murders), bringing to the fore multiple suspects and in the final *dénouement* revealing the perpetrator of the crime, showing that he or she had the capacity and opportunity to commit the crime, as well as tracing its motive. The *dénouement* is achieved through the agency of a lead investigator, e.g. Miss Marple, Hercule Poirot etc. When developing her intricate plots, Christie also deploys grammatical and stylistic tools to create clues and red herrings for the alternative solutions to the mystery (Seago 2014). The present paper concentrates on Christie's implementation of referential ambiguity as a tool in developing the plotline. In the work under discussion, Christie misleads the reader by means of a 'garden path' ambiguity, carefully ensuring that the reader entertains the inappropriate interpretation of a referential ambiguity till the moment of *denouement*.

In *Murder is Easy*, the relevant 'garden path' ambiguity is created by the grammatical device of subject drop. This grammatical pattern, characteristic of informal spoken English, will first be introduced, after which Christie's use of subject drop and its implications for the development of the plotline will be considered in detail. The focus of the discussion is the last line in (1):

(1) Matter of fact we had a bit of a row over something. Blinking bird she had – one of those beastly tittering canaries – always hated them – bad business – wrung its neck. *(*Murder is Easy*: 178)*

Two interpretations of wrung its neck *are in competition: (i) 'I', i.e. the speaker, the default interpretation of the sentence in isolation, and (ii) 'she', the discourse topic, an interpretation which is consistent with the containing context. The second interpretation turns out to be correct.* Interpreted correctly, this passage provides a clue to the identification of the perpetrator of the crime, by revealing their killer instinct, i.e. their capacity for killing, and their motive for the murders. I will show that the crucial line *wrung its neck* is echoed at various places reconnecting back to the ultimate cause of the crimes. Through these passages Christie maintains the garden path ambiguity, initially reinforcing the misleading default interpretation, and subsequently reversing to the correct interpretation.The second section of this paper investigates how the pivotal sentence *wrung its neck* is rendered in translation in Dutch, Italian and French.

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The Fictionalization of Oral Varieties in the History of German Drama

Lea Schäfer
Philipps-Universität Marburg
lea.schaefer@staff.uni-marburg.de

Since fictional, literary language usually represents a (written) standard variety, it often plays with the contrast to orality. This often involves certain features of orality that are considered characteristic of certain speaker groups, as we already find in classical Greek drama, which thus shaped modern European literatures evidently.

In German literature we already find passages with fictionalizations of oral varieties in Middle High German texts, as for example in Hugo von Trimberg's *Der Renner* (between 1300-1313). However, as a literary strategy, the opposition between written and oral language(s) becomes popular only from the early modern period. Especially within passages of direct speech, oral varieties are adapted, as in the following excerpt from Theodor Fontane's poem *Herr von Ribbeck auf Ribbeck im Havelland* (1889), in which the author embeds his own Low German orality into the High German matrix language:

(1) Und kommt ein Jung' übern Kirchhof her,
So flüstert's im Baume: „Wiste ne Beer?“
Und kommt ein Mädel, so flüstert's: „Lütt Dirn,
Kumm man röwer, ick gew' di ne Birn.“

In terms of psychological, but also linguistic creativity, the most interesting cases are those in which not the author's own, but a foreign variety is adapted. For the establishment of this game with variation as a literary strategy, the role of linguistic stereotypes in literary and public-social discourse plays an important role. This interacts with the possibilities and limitations of (fictional) language and perceptual linguistics, which is accompanied by considerations of the linguistic salience (Trudgill 2000). Hence, with this special field of fictional (and partly fictive) orality, one touches on quite different areas, which this paper would like to relate to each other.

The focus of the talk, however, is to present the goals, the technical implementation of corpus annotation, and some initial results of the project "Adaptations of German Varieties in German Drama (16th-19th Centuries)," which attempts to systematically record grammatical structure as well as literary function(s) and the role of intended orality in about 200 plays. A key question will be whether and how grammatical stereotypes develop and become entrenched in literary discourse.

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Towards a Fictional Grammar of Early and Late Middle Japanese

Sebastian Balmes
Universität Zürich
sebastian.balmes@aoi.uzh.ch

Research on classical Japanese narrative literature frequently refers to characteristics of Early Middle Japanese (EMJ, 9th–12th century), which to a certain extent are also shared by Late Medieval Japanese (LMJ, 13th–16th century). The most debated issue is arguably the function of the auxiliary *-kyer-*. Since the 1930s, -*kyer-* has been considered to mark transmitted past, although it has also been proposed that it expresses speaker commitment rather than indicating an external source of information (e.g. Frellesvig 2011, 76). Lewin (2003) has called its function 'epic preterite,' although it clearly differs from Hamburger's (1957) concept for a number of reasons. Most importantly, *-kyer-* does not lose its temporal function. Because it has both objective and subjective functions, *-kyer-* demonstrates that for the language of fiction the distinction between a 'colloquial' and 'literary mode' (Iwasaki 1993) could be misleading.

Another question a fictional grammar has to address is: how 'vague' are EMJ narratives? There is not always a clear distinction between first-person and third-person narration, and EMJ has a particularly strong tendency to omit arguments, especially subjects. There have been attempts to explain this by switch-reference, but the exceptions are so numerous (Fujii 1991, 137–141; McAuley 2002) that it is doubtful to what degree this concept is applicable to Japanese. It seems that vagueness was also employed as a literary technique (Jinno 2020). By contrast, perspectivization is remarkably clear in EMJ literature (Balmes 2022, 434–435).

Based on the assumption that fictional narratives not only possess literary but also linguistic characteristics, this paper addresses some basic issues regarding a fictional grammar of EMJ and LMJ. Because non-literary texts have been put down in Sinographic writing, such an analysis has to be based on a comparison of different types of text. At the same time, one needs also to take into account that the degree of fictionality may well change within a given work.

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