



Der Sonderforschungsbereich 991 “Die Struktur von Repräsentationen in Sprache, Kognition und Wissenschaft“ lädt herzlich ein zum Vortrag von

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12:30 – 14 Uhr

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Discourse Representation, Mental Representation and Frames

Lexically projected concepts come with requirements on their linguistic and non-linguistic context: they need various arguments and antecedents. This can be written as $X_1 \dots X_n C$ where the X_i s are the requirements and C the concept. If concepts as given to the mind are of this nature, they define a way in which the concepts can be integrated into a larger concept. Each X_i needs to be linked to an appropriate concept instantiation that is linguistically or non-linguistically given in the context. With these links, the concept can be seen as a concept instantiation (the basic unit of updating contexts, an “atomic formula”), as a way of pointing to the object instantiating it (a “referring expression”) as the concept of the object that would satisfy it with the given links and as an integrated concept formed by the root concept in which the concepts to which it is linked play a particular role.

Assuming that concepts are given in the mind in this way makes it possible to assume that the basic process that combines the meanings of words into the meaning of the whole sentence and into the concept of the utterance of that sentence is the construction of links from concepts to other concepts. Syntax (can the integrated meaning be the input to the production of the perceived utterance?) and plausibility (does the combination make good sense?) are the important constraints on the combination process but do not by themselves define the process of concept integration, a process that is equally crucial in perception and in non-linguistic communication.

The talk introduces a formal semantic representation for the view of concepts based on the simplest view of linking: the material that is integrated is incorporated into the concept. It develops a dynamic semantics for it, and gives some example applications: representing the buying of some nails, speech act recognition, propositional attitudes. It is further argued that discourse representation theory can be seen as the variant that starts from linking by pointers.

As it turns out, thinking of the concepts in the formalism in terms of frames is helpful in a number of respects.

Studierende und andere Interessierte sind herzlich willkommen.