PRAGMATIC MARKERS
AND PROPOSITIONAL ATTITUDE

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Editorial Address:
Justus Liebig University Giessen, English Department
Otto-Behaghel-Strasse 10, D-35394 Giessen, Germany
e-mail: andreas.jucker@anglistik.uni-giessen.de

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Gisle Andersen and Thorstein Fretheim (eds.)

Pragmatic Markers and Propositional Attitude

PRAGMATIC MARKERS AND PROPOSITIONAL ATTITUDE

Edited by

GISLE ANDERSEN
University of Bergen

THORSTEIN FRETHEIM
University of Trondheim

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List of Contributors

Gisle Andersen
Department of English
University of Bergen
Sydnesplassen 7
5007 Bergen
NORWAY
gisle.andersen@eng.uib.no

Thorstein Fretheim
Linguistics Department
University of Trondheim
7491 Trondheim
NORWAY
thorstein.fretheim@hf.ntnu.no

Elly Ifantidou
English Department
Athens University of Economics
     and Business
76 Patisson Street
Athens 104-34
GREECE
elly@aueb.gr

Regina Blass
Nairobi Evangelical Graduate School of
     Theology (NEGST)
P.O. Box 24686
Nairobi
KENYA
regina_blass@sil.org

Seiko Fujii
Department of Language and
     Information Sciences
Graduate School of Arts and Sciences
University of Tokyo
3-8-1 Komaba, Meguro-ku
Tokyo 153-8902
JAPAN
fujii@kokken.go.jp

Andreas H. Jucker
Institut für Anglistik und Amerikanistik
Justus-Liebig-Universität
Otto-Behaghel Str. 10 B
35394 Giessen
GERMANY
*Andreas.Jucker@anglistik.uni-
     giessen.de*

Tomoko Matsui
Division of Languages
International Christian University
3-10-2 Osawa, Mitaka-shi
Tokyo 181-8585
JAPAN
matsui@icu.ac.jp

Steve Nicolle
Summer Institute of Linguistics (SIL)
P.O. Box 44456
Nairobi
KENYA
Steve-Alison_Nicolle@sil.org

Claus Dieter Pusch
Romanisches Seminar
Albert-Ludwigs-Universität Freiburg
Werthmannplatz 3
79085 Freiburg im Breisgau
GERMANY
pusch@uni-freiburg.de

Sara W. Smith
Psychology Department
California State University, Long
    Beach
Long Beach, CA 90840-0901
USA
sasmith@csulb.edu

Satoko Suzuki
Macalester College
1600 Grand Avenue
St. Paul, MN 55105
USA
suzuki@macalester.edu

Ildikó Vaskó
Dept. of Scandinavian Studies
Eötvös Loránd University of Budapest
Ajtósi Dürer sor 19-21
1146 Budapest
HUNGARY
trollskog@ludens.elte.hu

Introduction

Gisle Andersen
University of Bergen

Thorstein Fretheim
University of Trondheim

The present collection of papers grew out of a panel on Particles and Propositional Attitude at the 6th International Pragmatics Conference, Reims, July 19-24 1998. One of the papers presented in Reims was not received for publication, while one paper included in this volume, the one by Elly Ifantidou, was not presented in Reims.

1. Pragmatic markers

We find it necessary to comment briefly on our choice of the collocation 'pragmatic marker' in the title *Pragmatic Markers and Propositional Attitude*.

Most contributors to this volume refer to their objects of study not as 'markers' but as 'particles'. While we are aware that the term 'particle' has been variably used with reference to a morphologically rather disparate set of linguistic expressions, including grammaticalized phrases as well as monomorphemic words, we judged the even broader term 'marker' to be more adequate, considering the wide range of linguistic phenomena to which the present collection of articles is devoted. It should also be borne in mind that some of the particles explored here are claimed to interact with and receive support from other linguistic devices, like sentence type or specific prosodic

properties of the verbal stimulus, which could be called 'markers' but which are certainly not 'particles'.

The modifier 'pragmatic' is potentially more controversial than the head noun 'marker'. Although it is true that the kind of meaning encoded by what the editors of this volume refer to as pragmatic markers frequently does not affect the truth conditions of the proposition expressed by the utterance, we do not want to leave the readers with the impression that we equate 'pragmatic' content and 'non-truthconditional' content. We consider a study of the meaning of a given linguistic item in a given utterance to belong to the domain of pragmatics, because part of the utterance meaning of the item can only be derived as a result of the addressee's extra-linguistic inferential processing of the stimulus containing it. The lexically encoded meaning of the markers examined in this book generally underdetermines the contribution of those markers to the overall meaning communicated by the utterances in which they occur. The *semantic* meaning of a marker equals its *encoded* meaning, but its encoded meaning only represents a very useful (and occasionally quite necessary, so it seems) constraint on the kinds of *pragmatic*, or *extralinguistic* inferences that the addressee processing an utterance will draw in his effort to comprehend the message communicated. Pragmatically derived meaning affects the hearer's recovery of explicitly communicated assumptions and implicitly communicated assumptions alike. 'Explicit' is not to be equated with 'semantic', and 'implicit' is not to be equated with 'pragmatic'. Following Relevance Theory (Sperber and Wilson 1986/1995), the editors of this volume tie the semantics/pragmatics distinction to two fundamentally different sorts of cognitive process in utterance interpretation, namely the distinction between linguistic (semantic) decoding and extra-linguistic (pragmatic) inference.

In addition to semantically encoded concepts there are also semantically encoded instructions for the hearer to follow in order to derive intended cognitive effects, including implicitly communicated ones; in the relevance-theoretic terminology (Blakemore 1987, 1992; Wilson and Sperber 1993) there is a *procedural* semantics alongside a *conceptual* semantics.

No article in the present collection disputes the view of the semantics/pragmatics dichotomy adumbrated here, and most authors are seen to explicitly share it with us.

It is far from accidental that we did not let the term 'discourse markers' appear in the title of this book instead of 'pragmatic markers'. For Bruce Fraser (1996), 'discourse markers' constitute a subtype of pragmatic markers, specifically "an expression which signals the relationship of the basic message to the foregoing discourse" (Fraser 1996:186). The connection between the notion 'discourse marker' and textual functions is highly salient in Deborah Schiffrin's account, for example, where she defines discourse markers as

sequentially dependent elements that bracket units of talk" (Schiffrin 1987:31). Indeed, 'discourse markers' is a term which has come to be associated predominantly with discourse analysis and such markers are assumed to play a key role in establishing coherence relations in discourse (see e.g. Risselada and Spooren 1998). The emphasis on corpus based data is a salient feature of discourse analysis and is therefore also seen to prevail in studies which are professedly concerned with the function of so-called discourse markers. Some of the papers included in this volume do rely extensively on the use of corpora, but many of them rely mainly, or even exclusively, on invented examples based on native user competence. More importantly, however, the linguistic function of the majority of markers examined in this volume has rarely been associated with the label 'discourse marker', and the same goes for most of the theoretical issues raised by the authors. By choosing the term 'pragmatic marker' instead of 'discourse marker' we believe we do not run the risk of evoking unintended connotations.

2. The linguistic expression of propositional attitude

Scholars of a typically philosophical bent are likely to associate the term 'propositional attitude' with a specific tradition in philosophy of language and with attempts to formulate a logic of propositional attitude as understood within that tradition. So-called propositional attitude sentences are held to be ambiguous between a *de re* (transparent) and a *de dicto* (opaque) reading (see now Jaszczolt 1999, and Jaszczolt forthcoming). There is no trace of this philosophical debate in the papers included in the present volume. For us the important distinction is between communicated propositional content on the one hand and communicated attitudes to that content on the other, the idea being that in interactive discourse we not only express propositions, we also express different attitudes to them. That is, we communicate how our mind entertains those propositions that we express. A speaker is capable of making mutually manifest (Sperber and Wilson 1986/95) an attitude of belief, desire, hope, doubt, fear, regret, or pretense that a given proposition P represents a true state of affairs, which attitude the interlocutor will attribute to the speaker if the communication is successful.

In the words of Hans Kamp (1990:32), "People have attributed propositional attitudes to other people (as well as to many kinds of animals) as long as anyone can remember; and those who have engaged in the practice have been no better informed about the inner workings of the mind than we are at present." It is probably true that we only rarely encode in a univocal linguistic form exactly those propositional attitudes that we intend to

communicate. The logical form of an utterance typically underdetermines both the proposition expressed and the way in which the speaker entertains it (Sperber and Wilson 1986/1995), but a very restricted number of mood indicators in natural language, notably syntactic marking by means of sentence type (declarative, interrogative, imperative, exclamative, etc.) and morphological marking of mood in verbs (indicative, subjunctive, etc.), help constrain the hearer's attribution of attitude to the proposition expressed by the speaker's utterance. And then there are verbs whose lexically defined function is to encode a specific attitude or range of attitudes in syntactic constructions consisting of (a), a subject term referring to the one who has the propositional attitude in question, (b), the verb that encodes the attitude, and finally (c), a complement clause introduced by a complementizer such as *that* or *if/whether* which expresses the proposition relative to which the attitude is understood to apply. This sort of grammatical structure is useful not only for communicating one's attitude to the proposition of the complement but also for attitude reports, whether the reported attitude is attributed to some third person or to the speaker herself at some time prior to the time of utterance. For example, *think*, *hope*, and *wonder* are three English attitude predicates which are used both to express an attitude and in attitude reports; *understand* and *take it (that)*, on the other hand, are two attitude predicates which sound strange in reports or descriptions of someone's attitude to a given proposition:

(1)   a   I think (that) the lock has been changed.
        b   She thought (that) the lock had been changed.

(2)   a   I hope (that) the lock has been changed.
        b   She hoped (that) the lock had been changed.

(3)   a   I wonder if the lock has been changed.
        b   She wondered if the lock had been changed.

(4)   a   I understand that the lock has been changed./?
        b   #She understood that the lock had been changed.

(5)   a   I take it that the lock has been changed.
        b   ?She took it that the lock had been changed.

Some of the matrix predicates appearing in (1)-(5) appear to have a double linguistic function, as a non-truthconditional indicator of the matrix subject referent's attitude to the proposition expressed in the complement, or as a regular lexical verb contributing to the proposition expressed. For example, while the function of the past tense form *understood* in (4b) is to constrain the truth conditions of a proposition whose linguistic domain includes the entire complex sentence, the present tense form *understand* in (4a) will, depending on

context, be interpreted either as a predicate contributing to the propositional form or as a non-truthconditional encoder of a specific type of attitude to the proposition expressed in the embedded clause. Past tense *understood* in (4b) only tolerates a factive interpretation of the verb *understand*. *Take it (that)* in (5a), on the other hand, is absolutely wellformed only when its function is to express the speaker's attitude to the proposition associated with the complement clause, so the verb *take* in this lexical expression sounds so much better with a first person subject and the present tense form of the finite verb, than with a second or third person subject and the past tense *took*.

A useful alternative to expressing a propositional attitude in the main clause and the proposition itself in a complement clause is seen in (6)-(10), where the speaker combines the information encoded by sentence type and the information encoded by an attitude predicate, by placing the latter in a designated 'parenthetical' position, more specifically in a right-detached 'tag' position, appended to the declarative or interrogative, which means that the non-truthconditional content is physically separated from the truthconditional content expressed in the main clause:

(6)   The lock has been changed, I think.
(7)   The lock has been changed, I hope.
(8)   Has the lock been changed, I wonder?
(9)   The lock has been changed, I understand.
(10)   The lock has been changed, I take it.

The grammatical indeterminacy of (4a) disappears once the verb *understand* is placed in the right-detached parenthetical position shown in (9). Parenthetical *understand* is a pure non-truthconditional indicator of propositional attitude, as are the other parenthetical predicates in the set (6)-(10).

Interestingly, in a large number of languages the right-detached position occupied by the parenthetical clause attitude markers in (6)-(10) is also a favorite position for particles which encode a propositional attitude. This formal resemblance reflects a functional resemblance. The sentence structures in (12) and (13) below may be said to encode a more complex, or more nuanced kind of propositional attitude than the tag-free declarative in (11), in the same way that the parentheticals in (6)-(10) modify the kind of propositional attitude signaled by the declarative vs interrogative form of the host sentence. The fact that the attitude markers *maybe* (a grammaticalized combination of two verbs) and *then* (a grammaticalized adverb with an originally temporal reference) permit an interrogative host as an alternative to a declarative one testifies to this complexity.

(11)   Paul is tired.

(12)   Paul is tired, maybe?
(13)   Paul is tired then?

The declarative sentence form of (11) signals a speaker commitment to the proposition expressed. (12) and (13) contain the same declarative sentence but the respective markers *maybe* and *then* encode an attitude which is only compatible with a weak degree of speaker commitment to the proposition expressed. In fact, (11)-(13) *encode* no such commitment at all, in spite of the declarative to which the tag items are appended. Although an utterance of (12) or (13) can easily be inferred to *implicate* the speaker's belief that Paul is tired, the speaker could also be totally uncommitted to any belief as to the alethic status of the proposition expressed by the declarative host of the utterance-final marker; and while an utterance of (11) would appear to be descriptive of a state of affairs involving a certain Paul as sentient participant, Relevance Theory with its distinction between *descriptive* and *interpretive* dimensions of language use (Sperber and Wilson 1986: 224-254) has prepared the ground for a wholly different approach to the study of the semantic relationship between the proposition expressed and 'mood' indicators like the utterance-final markers in (12) and (13). Their ideas about the difference between description and interpretation (or metarepresentation) and their claims about the exploitation of 'interpretive resemblance' in communication (Wilson and Sperber 1988a, 1988b) has been adopted in several of the papers in this volume. The markers in (12)-(13) reveal that the speaker is not asserting the truth of the proposition expressed by the preceding declarative. These utterances are not descriptions of Paul's psychological state, they are representations of the speaker's interpretation of a thought she attributes to her interlocutor. An assertive utterance commits the speaker to the truth of the proposition it expresses. Conversely, a declarative is not necessarily produced with the intention to assert the truth of the proposition expressed: it can be used to metarepresent a thought which the speaker attributes to some other person, as in direct quotation and other forms of reports of past speech events. A declarative can also be used to perform an act of inquiry, in which case intonation or a special pragmatic particle can indicate that the speech act performed is to be taken as a question, albeit a biased one. The universally acknowledged sentence types - declarative, interrogative, imperative, exclamative - are in fact a special kind of pragmatic markers in our sense. They tell us what basic type of propositional attitude is being communicated, and then some more delicate attitudinal differentiations, or some coexistent type of propositional attitude can be communicated with the help of non-truthconditional particles, or intonation, or a combination of the two.

3. Overview of the papers in this volume

This collective volume is in its entirety devoted to studies of individual pragmatic markers or sets of markers. A variety of languages are represented, including Amharic, English, Gascon, German, Greek, Hausa, Hungarian, Japanese, Norwegian and Swahili. The volume constitutes a combination of empirical and introspective approaches to the individual markers investigated. The papers by Andersen, Fujii, Nicolle, Pusch, Smith and Jucker and Suzuki are based on empirical data, including corpora of spontaneous conversation, while the remaining studies are carried out mainly on an introspective basis.

All of the studies thoroughly explore the attitudinal functions of the respective markers in contemporary language, and two studies, notably Fujii and Pusch, also address the diachronic development of the forms in question. As regards theoretical frameworks, Relevance Theory assumes a strong position in a majority of the studies, while some draw on the conceptual framework of grammaticalization theory, whose notions of subjectivity and subjectification capture the synchronic functions and diachronic development of pragmatic markers encoding speaker attitude. As an appropriate balance, Smith and Jucker's analysis is placed within their own framework of negotiation of interlocutors' common ground, as developed in Jucker and Smith (1996, 1998).

From a relevance-theoretic point of view, pragmatic markers can be seen to facilitate inferential processes. For instance, Blakemore (1987) argues that markers like *but*, *so* and *after all* constrain the derivation of implicatures. In analogy with the notion of implicature, relevance theorists have introduced the notion of 'explicature', which captures assumptions that are explicitly communicated by an utterance. This category includes not only the proposition expressed by the utterance, but also "a range of higher-level explicatures obtained by embedding the proposition expressed under an appropriate speech-act or propositional-attitude description" (Wilson and Sperber 1993:14). It is clear from this definition that pragmatic markers which express attitudinal meanings can be expected to contribute on the explicit side of communication. In fact, Wilson and Sperber conclude that "[w]ithin this category of procedural constraints on explicatures, there is thus a rich variety of data to explore" (ibid:23). The current volume is a joint step in this direction of linguistic enquiry.

A distinction must be drawn between conceptual representations of speaker attitude, such as the parenthetical evidential expressions *I think* and *I believe* (cf. Ifantidou 1994), and procedural constraints on the process of identifying the intended explicatures. An example of the latter type of encoding could be the popular irony marker *As if!*. This expression would clearly be hard

to pin down in conceptual terms. A better analysis is to argue that it encodes procedural meaning; that is to say, it encodes an instruction to the hearer as to how to treat some propositional information. More specifically, it constrains the derivation of an attitudinal higher-level explicature, equivalent to 'The speaker does not believe that P'. Several of the studies in this volume argue that the markers analysed encode procedural constraints on higher-level explicatures.

As briefly mentioned above, the domain of speaker attitude includes a variety of different notions, and this volume describes many of these, including surprise, animosity, newsworthiness, affective stance, epistemic commitment, lexical commitment, guarantee of relevance, mutual manifestness and general consensual truth. In particular, several studies (Andersen, Nicolle, Suzuki) focus on the expression of attitude towards quoted material. Commonly, a quotation is accompanied by an expression of the speaker's evaluation of its propositional content, and, as Suzuki puts it, "expressing the speaker's attitude is inherently tied to the nature of quotation". Quotations and hearsay representations are a means to reduce the degree of commitment, and to express a certain psychological distance (Andersen, Fujii) towards, or 'non-incorporation' (Suzuki, see also Blass) of, the propositional content. As Nicolle and Suzuki argue, markers can function as a framing device that physically separates the quote from the rest of the utterance, simultaneously reflecting a psychological distance. From a relevance-theoretic point of view, the notion of interpretive use is crucial in this connection, quotations being one type of interpretive use. Several authors show how particles can mark off linguistic material as representations not of a thought held to be true by the speaker but of an attributed thought (Andersen, Fretheim, Ifantidou, Nicolle), and Nicolle suggests the possibility of cross-linguistic parallels as regards procedural markers of interpretive use.

We now turn to a brief presentation of each of the studies in this volume. For convenience, this presentation - as well as the papers themselves - is alphabetically ordered.

Gisle Andersen is concerned with the use of *like* as a pragmatic marker in English conversation. He argues that this pragmatic marker provides speakers whose dialect includes this linguistic resource with a means to dissociate themselves slightly from the expressions contained in the utterance. In its most general use, *like* provides the hearer with a signal that a less-than-literal interpretation of the utterance (specifically, of the immediately following material) is the most relevant one. Analysing spoken corpus data, Andersen claims that the use of *like* commonly cooccurs with semantically loose use of expressions and provides a procedural signal about the need for enrichment or loosening (Carston 1996) of the following material. But, observing that *like* can

also occur in contexts where there is no semantic discrepancy between the concept denoted by the linguistic expression used and the concept that figures in the speaker's thought, Andersen introduces the notion of metalinguistic use of *like*, in which the marker qualifies the following material in terms of its formal rather than semantic properties and expresses a certain psychological distance to the expressions used. Used metalinguistically, *like* may suggest that alternative modes of expression may be equally, or more, appropriate, or that the expression chosen is one which is to some extent stylistically awkward for the speaker to use (non-incorporated); hence, *like* is capable of expressing an attitude of what Stubbs (1986) calls reduced 'lexical commitment' towards the linguistic material that falls in its scope. Andersen also discusses the use of *like* in connection with reported speech, arguing that all its uses are captured by the relevance-theoretic notion of interpretive resemblance.

Regina Blass analyses a range of particles from three different languages, English, German and Hausa, an Afro-Asiatic, Chadic language. She is concerned with particles that encode that the proposition expressed by the utterance contains mutually manifest information. In particular, she shows that English *after all*, German *ja* and *doch* and the particles *mana*, *ashe* and *lalle* in Hausa all constrain the interpretational procedure by indicating mutual manifestness. She argues that this notion is better fit to capture the meanings of these markers than alternatives such as 'mutual knowledge', because the former covers cases where the hearer has no prior knowledge of the propositional information, but is able to arrive at this knowledge by perception or deduction. Markers of mutual manifestness are, according to Blass, a type of evidential, and the reason for their use is the speaker's wish to strengthen the proposition expressed, in order to strengthen or weaken preceding propositions or held assumptions. They encode a procedure for constructing an explicature on a higher level. But the particles she analyses differ in terms of their ability to express attitudinal features in addition to mutual manifestness. Of the German and English particles she investigates, only *ja* can express exclamatory surprise, only *after all* has an additional function of constraining an implicature by indicating that the proposition expressed is a premise, and only *wohl* indicates less than full evidence of the mutual manifestness. The Hausa particle *mana* does not exhibit any of these additional features; Hausa has special particles for the purpose of exclamatory surprise, namely *ashe* and *lalle*. Hence, Blass reveals both cross-linguistic similarities and differences with respect to the attitudinal meanings of knowledge particles.

The paper by **Thorstein Fretheim** extends previous research on the semantics and pragmatics of the two Norwegian right-detached (tag) particles *da* and *altså* historically derived from causal adverbs meaning 'then' or 'thus' (Vaskó and Fretheim 1997). Fretheim recapitulates his earlier analysis of *da*

and *altså* as inference particles (Fretheim 1989) which carry the procedural meaning that the declarative or interrogative they are appended to expresses a proposition whose truth the speaker believes the hearer to be committed to. When the host is interrogative, *da* is produced either with a High or a (falling to) Low utterance-final tone. The former pronunciation encodes an openness, or lack of bias concerning the truth value of the proposition expressed and can be used to communicate (weakly) that the speaker is inclined to doubt that the proposition expressed is true. It is argued that this communicated doubt about the truthfulness of the proposition expressed is encoded when *da* occurs in a conditional clause. While a conditional clause never expresses a 'ground-level' explicature, a Norwegian conditional clause modified by *da* does express a higher-level explicature, notably the speaker's dissociative attitude to the conditional protasis.

Seiko Fujii proposes an analysis of *mono* in Japanese. In its literal use, *mono* is a noun with a very general meaning, corresponding to 'thing(s)', and is used extensively as the head of noun-modifying constructions. *Mono* can appear in a set of constructions that give rise to a variety of different speaker attitudes. Fujii draws on recordings of casual dyadic conversations and is concerned both with synchronic functions and the diachronic development of this marker. She argues that, generally, *mono* has a 'set-evoking effect'; when a proposition is followed by the particle, the speaker presents the event, state or situation referred to in the previous proposition as a general type representing a more general class rather than as a specific token. The utterance thus implies that the proposition expressed is generalizable as a representative of a type. A wide range of attitudes may be associated with this usage, including exclamative and recollective attitudes, the speaker's modal stance of obligation and - if found in utterance-final position - an attitude of self-justification and the non-challengeability of the propositional information. Importantly, *mono* provides counterevidence to Fraser's (1996) assumption that pragmatic markers are always separate and distinct from the concomitant propositional meaning, as *mono*-utterances commonly have dual interpretations where the modal-attitude and the definition-stating interpretation seem to cooccur and to be closely related. The various pragmatic effects and implicatures of *mono*-constructions originate in the set-evoking effect of the noun-modifying construction. This makes Fujii conclude that *mono* is undergoing a grammaticalization process that not only has led to conventionalization of the associated attitudinal implicatures, but also to the emergence of new structures, specifically the *mono da*, *mono nara* and *mono da kara* constructions, *nara* and *kara* being causal and conditional connectives. On the basis of her synchronic data, Fujii shows that the many constructions that *mono* occurs in represent varying degrees of decategorization and pragmatic strengthening.

Elly Ifantidou gives an account of the particle *taha* in Modern Greek. She characterizes this particle as a marker of weak evidential information. The Greek data presented makes it evident that *taha* can occur in initial, mid and final position and may be appended to declaratives, interrogatives and imperatives alike. Given its encoded evidential meaning, the particle reduces the speaker's commitment to the proposition expressed, but it may also be used with an associated implicature that the proposition expressed must be construed as a case of interpretive use. Ifantidou assesses previous accounts and concludes that they do not adequately explain the fact that *taha* may occasionally be interpreted as an evidential particle and occasionally as a hearsay particle. Hence, she proposes an alternative analysis within the framework of Relevance Theory. Ifantidou thoroughly explores the analytical properties of *taha*, and detects differences between utterances with or without the particle in all three sentence types. Comparing the particle with the corresponding English evidential adverbials 'apparently', 'seemingly' and the hearsay adverbials 'allegedly', 'reportedly' (cf. Ifantidou 1994), she concludes that *taha* provides a procedural constraint on the higher-level explicatures of the utterance and makes a contribution to the truth-conditions of the proposition expressed. These properties are only partly shared with the adverbials mentioned, in that the hearsay and evidential adverbials, unlike the particle, encode conceptual information.

Tomoko Matsui presents an extensive analysis of *yo*, which is a common Japanese sentence-final particle. She points out descriptive and explanatory weaknesses with existing accounts and presents an alternative analysis on the basis of Relevance Theory. Despite what is claimed in the previous literature, *yo* can be appended to all four basic sentence types declarative, interrogative, imperative and exclamative, and to ironic and metaphorical utterances. According to Relevance Theory, utterances tacitly convey a guarantee of relevance. There are, however, cases where the hearer might not easily recover all the assumptions which the speaker intended to make manifest, and in such cases there may be a need for extra encouragement for the hearer to pursue the search for contextual effects. It is such an extra encouragement that seems to be provided by the particle *yo*, as it communicates the speaker's informative intention more strongly than an utterance not containing this particle. Hence, Matsui argues, the particle *yo* overtly encodes a guarantee of relevance. The function of the particle is to encode the speaker's desire that her informative intention be fully recognized by the hearer. It thus has a capacity to guide the hearer to explore assumptions that are implicitly communicated by the utterance. Matsui thoroughly explores the analytical properties of this particle and argues that *yo* constrains the higher-level explicatures of the utterance and encodes procedural information.

Steve Nicolle discusses the use of markers in relation to the relevance-theoretic notions of interpretive use and procedural encoding. He investigates data from two unrelated African languages, Amharic and Swahili, and demonstrates the existence of markers of general interpretive use and specific (e.g. interrogative, exclamative) interpretive use. The Amharic particle *ete* is a question tag which serves the purpose of marking the speaker's surprise in a wh-interrogative clause. Used with the force of an exclamative, this particle marks a thought as interpretively used for the purpose of indicating its relevance to the speaker. In contrast, the particle *indɛ* is a much more general marker of interpretive use. It interacts closely with prosodic features and voice quality, including intonation and a creaky voice, to denote a variety of attitudes such as irony, disapproval or that the associated proposition is counter-expectational, and it also has basic interrogative or exclamative functions. Nicolle argues that Relevance Theory provides a unitary characterization of this particle, despite its many functions, since these functions can be subsumed under the notion of general interpretive use. The same unified account of interrogative, ironic and exclamative functions is provided for the Swahili particle *je*. The specific function of this particle is to mark an interrogative, but Nicolle shows that it can be used with more general functions also. It can have a wide or a narrow scope, and it encodes an instruction to the hearer to treat whatever is within its scope as being used interpretively for the purpose of seeking additional information about it. In addition, prosodic separation from the rest of the utterance may provide a framing effect and thus mark the speaker's psychological distance from the question in its scope (cf. papers by Andersen and Suzuki).

Claus D. Pusch presents data from Gascon, which is a variety of Occitan spoken in the southwest of France. He focuses on the use of two so-called 'enunciative' particles, *que* and *e*, by some scholars regarded as unique within the Romance languages, and describes both their formal and functional characteristics. Both particles only occur in preverbal position in affirmative sentences, but *e* is distributionally restricted to subordinate clauses. Moreover, the two particles lead to different attitudinal implications; *que* expresses an assertive attitude towards the proposition expressed, while *e* expresses a doubt as to its truth. Hence, the particle *que* yields an affirmative reading of the sentence, while *e* can be considered a signal that the speaker is not taking full communicative responsibility for the proposition expressed by the subordinate clause. Pusch assesses the previous literature, and his empirical investigation is a comparison between Pilawa's (1990) written data and his own corpus consisting of recordings of spontaneous and semi-spontaneous speech. Focusing on distributional properties in relation to different types of

sentence/clause and different types of verb (e.g. *verba credendi, dicendi* and *sapiendi*), Pusch concludes that the distribution of the particles in discourse can largely be attributed to their attitudinal properties. Thus, his data corroborates Pilawa's findings. However, he also points out a tendency for speakers of Gascon to transfer the main clause patterns (including the use of *que*) to certain embedded clauses, for instance verbal complement clauses. This phenomenon, Pusch argues, can be viewed as a case of grammaticalization.

Basing their study on recorded conversations between Californian students, **Sara Smith and Andreas Jucker** view the use of discourse markers as a type of negotiation strategy and link their functions to the notion of common ground (Clark 1992, 1996). In spoken interaction, communicators ordinarily assume their contributions to be consistent with each other in terms of propositional attitudes and the content conveyed, and any deviation from this is likely to be marked in some way. Against this background, the crucial distinction between default attitudes and marked attitudes is introduced. The latter are likely to be explicitly marked, and it is in this process discourse markers may play a role. The authors show how such discrepancy marking is provided by the items *actually*, *well* and *in fact*. Acknowledging the complexity of the notion of 'speaker attitude', the authors choose to focus on deviation from the attitude on the floor with regard to three types of attitude: speaker's commitment, evaluation of newsworthiness and affective evaluation of the propositional information. Specifically, they show that *actually*, which is given the greatest attention in their paper, is used to introduce the presentation of a counterclaim. The surprising result of their empirical work is that *actually* introduces material that contradicts expectations about perspectives towards facts and not, as one might expect, material that contradicts the facts themselves, hence that the negotiation concerns information that is conveyed implicitly rather than explicitly by the utterance.

The focus of **Satoko Suzuki**'s paper is the Japanese linguistic expression *da*, which is traditionally analysed as the informal non-past form of the copula. However, the copula is distinguishable from *da* used in connection with quotative sentences, which is what Suzuki is primarily concerned with in her paper. In the latter type of use, the particle *da* is located between the quote and one of the quotative particles *to* or *tte*. On the grounds of formal properties, notably intonation and choice of quotative particle, Suzuki distinguishes between *da-to* sentences and *da-tte* sentences. Both are used to quote a remark by somebody other than the speaker. In *da-to* sentences this quote is a repetition of what the addressee has just said, while in *da-tte* sentences, the quote is attributed to a third person. But the speaker does not remain neutral as regards the content of the quote; both types of sentences also express an attitude of surprise, disbelief and even animosity towards the information

conveyed in the quote. Given these functional properties, Suzuki proposes that the common function of *da* in quotatives is to indicate a certain psychological distance to the quote. With reference to Bakhtin's (1978) literary analysis, she introduces the notion of 'psychological non-incorporation'. The presence of *da* in quotatives constrains the expression of speaker attitude by providing a physical demarcation of the quote. Just like pauses may be used to frame quotations, hence to make them appear less incorporated in the speaker's psychology, the particle *da* has a similar framing effect because it, too, physically separates the quote from the rest of the sentence. The notion of psychological non-incorporation links up with the expression of surprise and animosity, as these attitudes are also reflections of non-incorporation of the information contained in the quote.

Finally, **Ildikó Vaskó** illustrates how two Hungarian particles, *de* and *is*, have effect on the interpretation procedure and how they complement each other in marking the relation that exists between two propositions. The particle *is* is principally a focus particle that is roughly equivalent in meaning with English 'too' or 'either'. In its most basic use, it performs the role of a conjunction without encoded temporal or causal implications. In combination with the particle *de*, however, *is* marks two propositions as causally related. The associated attitudinal meaning concerns the epistemic status of the two propositions P and Q, one of which represents mutually manifest information. The particle combination provides a signal that the speaker views the information encoded by P to be reasonable, given the information encoded by Q. In other words, the proposition of the second conjunct represents the speaker's evidence for the claim of the first conjunct. Vaskó explores the Hungarian data in terms of differences in sentence position, scope and order of premise/consequence. She argues that the particles signal a potential contrast between the speaker's and the hearer's attitude towards one of the propositions; hence they encode procedural constraints on the implicatures of utterances.

Acknowledgements

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The role of the pragmatic marker *like* in utterance interpretation

Gisle Andersen
University of Bergen

1.   Introduction

Studies in linguistic pragmatics have amply documented that linguistically encoded meaning underdetermines the propositional meaning of utterances, and that pragmatic inference is required to fill the gap between encoded linguistic content and the proposition expressed. Reference assignment, disambiguation, recovery of ellipted material and enrichment of vague expressions are examples of context-dependent, pragmatic, processes whose outcome contributes to propositional meaning. These processes are necessary in order for the hearer to construct a hypothesis concerning the speaker's informative intention. In communication generally, it is rarely the case that the propositional content of an utterance is exhausted by what is linguistically encoded. In everyday conversation, given its commonly elliptical and fragmentary nature, the linguistic contribution may be particularly small, and hearers must put a relatively great amount of effort into inferential processes such as these.

In this paper I wish to argue that, for many speakers of English, the word *like* can play a crucial role in facilitating processes of pragmatic inference. These processes may be necessary in order for the hearer to arrive at the propositional meaning that a speaker wishes to communicate or for the hearer to recognise the utterance as a case of interpretive use. *Like* is a marker whose main contribution to utterance meaning is as a signal that the relation between an utterance and its underlying thought is not a one-to-one relation, but a relation of non-identical resemblance (Carston 1996a). The pragmatic marker *like* provides speakers whose dialect includes this linguistic resource with a means to dissociate themselves slightly from the expressions contained in the utterance. *Like* can contribute to utterance meaning in different ways, by signalling the need for loosening or enrichment of concepts encoded by the

material in its scope (which immediately follows the marker), or by signalling that this material contains a metarepresentation. It provides a signal of a certain psychological distance to the following lexical material, either in terms of its conceptual or its formal properties. I consider this type of marking to be an attitudinal aspect of utterance meaning. Thus, *like*, I argue, can be considered a marker of propositional attitude.

        In accordance with a previous study (Andersen 1998), I assume that *like* contributes to the interpretation and to the overall relevance of an utterance as a procedural constraint on its explicatures. The claim that *like* contributes to procedural rather than conceptual meaning amounts to saying that *like* does not itself encode a propositional constituent, but it constrains the process of identifying the propositional content of the utterance. Its meaning cannot be construed as a concept with logical and encyclopedic properties, but it encodes a procedure in the sense of 'a way of guiding, or constraining, the inferential phase of comprehension' (Wilson 1991:10). *Like* shares this important analytical property with several other pragmatic markers, some of which are the topic of other papers in this volume (cf. Ifantidou, Nicolle). However, it is worth pointing out that the kind of attitudinal marking that *like* brings about is of a somewhat special nature, in that it does not necessarily express an attitude towards a proposition that is fully fleshed out, but commonly has a narrow scope and qualifies a specific propositional constituent. Also, *like* turns out to be special, in that, unlike most pragmatic markers, it can have truth-conditional implications. (This also applies to *taha* in modern Greek, cf. Ifantidou this volume.) As a procedural marker, *like* constrains the material which is to be recovered by pragmatic inference and constitutes an interesting parallel to other procedural markers of interpretive use and speaker attitude that are discussed in the present volume.

1.1.   *Is* like *a filler?*

The pragmatic marker *like* is a highly noticeable and very frequent feature of many varieties of present-day English (cf. Schourup 1985; Underhill 1988; Blyth et. al. 1990; Romaine and Lange 1991; Ferrara and Bell 1995; Andersen 1997, 1998, etc.). The current investigation is based on empirical data from COLT, a corpus of London teenage conversation.[1]

        It is commonly assumed that the frequent use of *like* is connected with planning difficulties:

> In spoken English, people sometimes say *like* when they are hesitating or when they
> are thinking about what to say next. This is a very informal use, which many speakers

of English consider to be incorrect. *Collins Cobuild English Language Dictionary* (1987:842).

It is not my intention to reject the view that *like* can collocate with planning difficulties and self repairs. Several examples from my data suggest that a motivating factor for the use of *like* may be difficulties in planning or the search for the right word. This observation corroborates Schourup's (1985) characterisation of *like* as a so-called 'evincive', an item which indicates that the speaker is engaged in thinking. However, the description of *like* as a mere filler or a hesitation device is insufficient for several reasons.

Firstly, an overwhelming amount of instances of the pragmatic marker *like* occurs where neither speed of production nor discourse coherence suggest that there are any planning difficulties involved. It is quite common for *like* to occur between elements that are constituents of the same clause, where it is pronounced with the same efficiency of deliverance as the 'real' constituents of that clause. An example of this is (1):

(1)   Those are awful. Especially when the one next to you has got **like** forty four inch legs, and size B bra, you're standing there and going, okay
        (141703/11:7)

The prosodic patterns that emerge from the analysis of this and most other examples of intra-clausal *like* is that the on-line production of the utterance does not cause the speaker much difficulty. On the contrary, *like* frequently occurs in the midst of a continuous and rapid flow of speech and is generally not prosodically separated from the rest of the utterance. (Naturally, the fact that *like* is neither preceded nor followed by a pause is reflected by the lack of commas in the transcription.) These observations should be an incentive to look for other explanations for its frequent occurrence in conversation than as a mere hesitational interjection.

Secondly, and more importantly, *like* can be assigned features of meaning that we cannot associate with, for instance, filled pauses such as *er* or *erm* (cf. Clark 1996). Its meaning is one which pertains to the relation between a speaker's thought and the external representation of this thought and is crucially linked with propositional attitude. In its most general use, *like* provides the hearer with a clue that a less-than-literal interpretation of the utterance (specifically, of the immediately following material) is the most relevant one. Considering the data at hand, the use of *like* commonly cooccurs with semantically loose use of expressions. In such cases, *like* provides a procedural signal about the need for enrichment or loosening of the following material (cf. 2.1.). Enrichment and loosening are pragmatic inferential processes of ad hoc concept construction, as described in Carston (1996a). But

the use of *like* is not necessarily correlated with the need for ad hoc concept construction, as *like* may also occur in contexts where there is no semantic discrepancy between the concept denoted by the linguistic expression used and the concept that figures in the speaker's thought. In such cases, I argue, *like* qualifies the following material in terms of its formal (e.g. stylistic) rather than semantic properties. It expresses a certain psychological distance to the expressions used, suggesting that alternative modes of expression may be equally, or more, appropriate, or that the expression chosen is one which is to some extent stylistically awkward for the speaker to use. The latter type, where no conceptual discrepancy is involved, will be referred to as the metalinguistic use of *like*.

     In the current paper, I will present an analysis of these two types of use, assuming that both can be subsumed under a general description of *like* as a marker of non-identical resemblance between the utterance and its underlying thought. However, I will be primarily concerned with the task of analysing those utterances where one cannot argue that there is a conceptual discrepancy between what was said and what was meant, as these prove particularly challenging to account for. In addition, I present an analysis of what I consider to be a special case of *like* as a marker of non-identical resemblance, namely the so-called quotative complementiser BE + *like* (cf. Romaine and Lange 1991), arguing that the relevance-theoretic notion of interpretive use (attributed thoughts) provides a better description of its function than descriptions of *like* as an introducer of direct/reported speech or constructed dialogue.

2.   *Like* and interpretive resemblance

An utterance is a representation of a thought of the speaker and, as such, it may be a more or less precise representation of that thought. In relevance-theoretic terms, the proposition expressed by an utterance is viewed as an 'interpretation' of the thought of the speaker, and the relation between the proposition and the thought is one of 'interpretive resemblance' (Sperber and Wilson 1986/1995). This latter notion is meant to account for the fact that the relation between the propositional form of the utterance and the thought it corresponds to is rarely an identity relation. In fact, literalness, or identity between the propositional form and its underlying thought, is viewed as 'a limiting case rather than a norm' (Sperber and Wilson 1995:232). For the purpose of achieving optimal relevance, a speaker may produce an utterance which corresponds to a thought - something the speaker holds to be true - without the utterance itself being something that she literally holds to be true. Less-than-literal ('loose') use of language incorporates not only the poetic use