

Self-monitoring for additivity
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"Too" as a presupposition trigger is deviant in four ways. First of all, it does not accommodate. Second, while anaphoric, it does not seem to pass on the content of the retrieved antecedent for further processing in the current clause, in fact, it does not seem to have any content at all. Third, it accepts inaccessible antecedents (though not all). Finally, it is obligatory in a way that is hard to describe: in most—but crucially not all—of its contexts in real language use, its omission causes pragmatic inacceptability.

The talk reduces the last property to self-monitoring and thereby to speculative psycholinguistics. Natural language suffers from a massive underdetermination of meaning by form. This makes it unavoidable that interpretation needs to go for the most probable interpretation in the context: any deviance from this principle means that hearers choose to be wrong more often than they need. It can be made plausible moreover that they can do this rather well, using a Bayesian interpretation strategy. But successfully going for the most probable interpretation is by itself not enough to reach communicative success: speakers also need to make sure that their utterance has the meaning they want to express as the most probable interpretation in the context. The speaker has a limited number of expressive possibilities available for this task: the words of the language, and the space of allowed combinations.

Automated self-monitoring (ASM) can be modeled as a second optimisation round ("after" core syntax) which checks whether central semantic features are properly expressed, with an semi-ordering over those features. The talk will review a number of phenomena which can be treated using ASM and will show how "too" too can be reduced to this component. This reduction offers a new perspective on each of the four exceptional features of "too".

La présentation aura lieu dans le cadre du linglunch de l'UFRL de Paris Diderot, au 175, rue du Chevaleret, Mo Chevaleret. 4e étage, salle 4C92.

<http://www.linguist.univ-paris-diderot.fr/linglunch.html>