Analysing discourse relations in natural language: The case of space and time

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Abstract:

Much research on discourse relations focuses on the ways in which connections between clauses and sentences can be established, either implicitly or explicitly through markers such as "because", "before", "but", etc. However, the use of such markers in discourse also shows how a speaker conceptualises the relationships between various aspects of what they are saying. Whenever they occur in discourse, they are therefore reflections of the speakers' mind in this respect.

In this talk, I will illustrate these effects by discussing how speakers conceptualise and express relationships in time and space (Tenbrink, 2007). I will demonstrate the linguistic options in this regard, and show some principles for (and differences between) temporal and spatial relationships. Finally, I will briefly outline how relations in time and space can be investigated systematically in natural discourse using Cognitive Discourse Analysis (Tenbrink, 2015).

 References:
Tenbrink, Thora. 2007. Space, time, and the use of language: An investigation of relationships. Berlin: Mouton de Gruyter.
Tenbrink, Thora. 2015. Cognitive Discourse Analysis: Accessing cognitive representations and processes through language data. Language and Cognition 7:1, 98 – 137.