

Contrastive Discourse Particles: Effects of Information-Structure and Modality

In the talk, I will take a fresh look at the two (pairs of) German discourse particles *doch/DOCH* and *schon/SCHON* in (1, 2), which both import a contrastive meaning component to the utterances they occur in:

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|-----|----|----------------|---------|-----|----|-----------------|-------|
| (1) | a. | Peter ist doch | KRANK / | (2) | a. | Peter IST schon | KRANK |
| | b. | Peter ist DOCH | krank. | | b. | Peter ist SCHON | krank |
| | | Peter is PRT | ill | | | Peter is PRT | ill |

Starting out from some more recent accounts of the distribution and interpretation of *doch/DOCH* (Grosz 2010, Egg 2010, Coniglio, in prep.) and various older approaches to the meaning of modal and temporal *schon/SCHON* (Löbner 1989, Löbner 1999, Ormelius-Sandblom 1997), I will explore the validity of the two core hypotheses in (3):

- (3) i. accented DOCH = unaccented doch + verum focus (≈givenness of the proposition)
- ii. The meaning of modal contrastive *schon/SCHON* is intimately related to its basic temporal interpretation.

These hypotheses build on the null assumption that the unaccented and accented versions of the two particles have a basic meaning component in common, and that the differences in distribution are derived systematically from independent (information-structural) factors. Moreover, if correct, the analysis would show that there are different sources for a contrastive interpretation of different discourse particles, from which any observable differences in distribution and felicity conditions would follow.