

Report 2014 & 2015 of ACLC research group: Crosslinguistic Semantics

Coordinator: Maria Aloni

Web page:

<http://aclc.uva.nl/research/groups/content/crosslinguistic-semantics/crosslinguistic-semantics.html>

<https://sites.google.com/site/crosslinguisticsemanticsxlsx/home>

Current external funding:

NWO-Vidi project. Inquisitiveness below and beyond the sentence boundary. Floris Roelofsen, 2015-2020

ERC Starting grant. Quantification and Modality in the Realm of Questions, Floris Roelofsen, 2016-2021

Participants in 2015:

dr. M.D. Aloni (ILLC) senior researcher, coordinator
dr. I.C. van Alphen (ACLC), senior researcher
dr. P.J.E. Dekker (ILLC), senior researcher
dr. R.M. Genis (ACLC), senior researcher
prof. dr. J.A.G. Groenendijk (ILLC), senior researcher (emeritus)
prof. dr. P.C. Hengeveld (ACLC), senior researcher
dr. L. Hogeweg (ACLC), senior researcher
prof. dr. W.J.J. Honselaar (ACLC), senior researcher (emeritus)
dr. E.H. van Lier (ACLC), senior researcher
dr. H. Karawani (ACLC/ILLC), PhD candidate (graduated in June 2014)
M.B. Passer (ACLC), PhD candidate
A. Port (ILLC), PhD candidate
dr. R. Risselada (ACLC), senior researcher
dr. F. Roelofsen (ILLC), senior researcher
dr. T. Yarbay Duman (ACLC), senior researcher
dr. H. Zeevat (ILLC), senior researcher

Description of the research group:

In their search for the universal features and the range of variation in languages around the world linguists have paid most attention to phonological, morphological and syntactic properties. Much less attention has been paid to semantic and pragmatic features. To fill this gap, researchers from ACLC and ILLC have joined forces, addressing the questions involved in two different ways:

- (i) the documentation of cross-linguistic semantic variation through typological research;
- (ii) the modelling of semantic variation in explicit formalisations.

Research highlights in 2014/2015:

Most members of the cross-linguistic semantics group are also members of other ILLC/ACLC research groups and the information about their research highlights is already summarised in other group reports. Here we only mention the results of our PhD students:

Matthias Passer continued his PhD project "The Nature of Nominal Categorisation" supervised by Hedde Zeijlstra and Kees Hengeveld. In the last year Passer developed a mapping instrument for nominal classification devices, which for the first time allows for a quantification of systemic semanticity.

Angelika Port continued her PhD research on German epistemic indefinites. She conducted synchronic and diachronic corpus studies of *irgend*-indefinites and extended the framework presented in Aloni and Port (2015) to explain the historical development of these indefinites and their synchronic distribution.

Hadil Karawani concluded her PhD project "Mood for modality". This project explores the expression of counterfactuality crosslinguistically both from a syntax-semantics perspective – focusing on the interaction between tense, aspect, mood and modality – and from a semantic-pragmatic perspective – focusing on the presuppositions and implicatures of counterfactual conditionals in a dynamic framework.

Valorisation

Ingrid van Alphen was interviewed about language and gender in the journal of the Taalunie (Ned/Vlaams)

<http://taaluniebericht.org/artikel/grenzeloos/ingrid-van-alphen-mythes-over-taal-en-gender>

Aloni and Dekker edited the Cambridge Handbook of Formal Semantics (in press)
<http://www.cambridge.org/us/academic/subjects/languages-linguistics/semantics-and-pragmatics/cambridge-handbook-formal-semantics>

The XLSX group also organized the following seminars in 2014-2015:

- 11 June 2015: Henk Zeevat (ILLC): The importance of typology for a linguistic semantics
- 9 April 2015: Yaron McNabb (Utrecht University): Cross-categorial intensification: semblance or identity?
- 25 February 2015: Federico Gobbo (ACLCL): Correlatives cross-linguistically: A constructive Grammar Approach
- 8 December 2014: Anna Szabolcsi (NYU): KA particles cross-linguistically
- 13 November 2014: Natasha Koroktova (UCLA) Varieties of evidential shift
- 16 September 2014: Marcin Kilarski (Poznan) Systems of nominal classification