

## DEBRECEN WORKSHOP ON ARGUMENT STRUCTURE

*Argument structure* is one of the most fundamental, and, at the same time, the most controversial concepts in modern linguistic theory. Whether or not one considers argument structure to be a distinct level of representation, the expression *argument structure phenomena* functions for all as a pretheoretical cover term that describes a convergent and well-definable space in the grammar of natural languages.

The Debrecen Workshop on Argument Structure welcomes talks discussing state-of-the-art research in argument structure phenomena and their proper treatment in linguistic theory.

The key issue that we aim to address concerns the amount and the nature of information encoded in lexical representations, and the role these lexical representations play in syntactic structures. The so-called (neo-)constructionist line of inquiry represents a non-lexicalist approach to argument structure (see, for example, Hale & Keyser 1993, Marantz 1997, Arad 1998, and Borer 2005). This camp prefers to vacate the lexicon of possibly all grammatical content except for the core functional vocabulary, and argues that lexical *roots* are only associated with idiosyncratic semantic information. In this view, argument structure phenomena arise directly in syntax, with the encyclopaedic content of roots playing only a minor role in their determination.

By contrast, lexicalist approaches maintain the notion of an active and a grammatically rich lexicon, and they argue for its decisive role in argument realization (see, for example, Alsina 1996, Butt 1995, Butt & King 2000, Bresnan 2001, Levin & Rappaport Hovav 1995, 2005, Levin 1999, Webelhuth and Ackerman 1998; as well as Müller 2006 and Wechsler 2008 for some recent arguments for the lexicalist position). Argument structure is conceived of as a distinct interface level between the (conceptual) lexicon and syntax in these approaches.

Many others believe that argument structure is a lexical matter in particular respects, while syntax can also play a well-defined role in its determination. Reinhart and Siloni (2005), for example, argue for the parametrization of certain argument structure operations along the lexicon/syntax divide (see also Reinhart 2002, Everaert et al. to appear; as well as Horvath & Siloni to appear, who argue in detail for the position of argument structure being in part a lexical and in part a syntactic matter). Yet others, like Ramchand (2008), believe that though argument structure is in syntax, lexical roots do carry syntactic features which are directly relevant to their syntactic realization.

Besides the basic issue of the locus of representation, another dimension of argument structure investigation concerns the status and the nature of semantic roles *as determinants* of argument structure. There are competing hypotheses about the specific content of role inventories and the correct diagnostics for identifying them (see Levin & Rappaport Hovav 2005), as well as about the organization of roles into hierarchies (Gruber 1965, Fillmore 1968, Jackendoff 1972, 1976, Baker 1988, Bresnan 2001). Relatedly, there are different perspectives on whether semantic roles should be viewed as atomic notions (possibly represented as binary features, see Reinhart 2002), or whether they are best conceived of as collections of properties entailed by predicates (Dowty 1991, Ackerman and Moore 2001, Beavers 2006, 2010). These are all core

issues bearing on the nature of grammar design and the architectures appropriate to model it.

The workshop will focus on the basic issue of how much grammatically relevant meaning is encoded in the core lexical elements, and how much is encoded constructionally, directly in the syntax. We welcome abstracts that address this or related issues, including but not limited to the following questions:

How should argument-structure related information contained in a lexical entry of a word be represented?

What is the specific grammatical status of semantic roles?

What is the relationship between event structure and argument structure?

What is the role of aspectual notions (e.g. telicity, incremental theme, the scalar structure of events) in argument expression in general?

How are processes potentially affecting argument structure to be treated both within one language and cross-linguistically? These processes include but are not limited to the conative, (anti)causative, and dative alternation, nominalization, passivization, reflexivization, and complex predicate formation.

Are there reliable criteria for distinguishing arguments and adjuncts?

How does regular verbal polysemy correlate with variation in argument realization, and how can we best model such phenomena?

What challenges are there for the computational implementation of various argument realization phenomena?

We solicit papers which focus on these and related issues, either by investigating particular linguistic phenomena or by addressing more general design principles of grammar. We welcome submissions representing a variety of theoretical frameworks, such as Minimalism, LFG, HPSG, cognitive and construction grammar.

The workshop will take place at the University of Debrecen May 25-27, 2012. A total of 45 minutes will be allocated per speaker with 30 minutes for presentation and 15 minutes for discussion.

The language of the workshop is English. Anonymous abstracts should not exceed 2 pages in length with 2.5cm/1 inch margins and 12 point font size. Abstracts should be submitted as a PDF file. Submissions are limited to one single-authored and one joint-authored abstract per individual, *or* to two joint-authored abstracts per individual. All abstracts will be read by at least three reviewers.

Authors are requested to submit their abstracts via EasyChair on or before January 31, 2012.

The URL for abstract submission is:

<https://www.easychair.org/account/signin.cgi?conf=was2012>

For instructions on how to use EasyChair, please visit the workshop website at <http://was.unideb.hu>.

We are planning to publish a volume of selected papers from the workshop.

Invited speakers:

John Beavers (The University of Texas at Austin)

Katalin É. Kiss (Research Institute for Linguistics of the Hungarian Academy of Sciences & Pázmány Péter Catholic University)

Louisa Sadler (University of Essex)

Balázs Surányi (Research Institute for Linguistics of the Hungarian Academy of Sciences & Pázmány Péter Catholic University)

Important dates:

Deadline for abstract submission: January 31, 2012

Notification of acceptance: March 15, 2012

Workshop date: May 25-27, 2012

Organizing Committee:

The LFG Research Group at the University of Debrecen

Tibor Laczkó

György Rákosi

Eva Kardos

Gábor Csernyi

Program Committee:

Farrell Ackerman (University of California, San Diego)

Gábor Alberti (University of Pécs)

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Liz Coppock (Heinrich Heine Universität Düsseldorf)

Mary Dalrymple (University of Oxford)

Martin Everaert (Utrecht Institute of Linguistics OTS)

Berit Gehrke (Universitat Pompeu Fabra)

Julia Horvath (Tel Aviv University)

István Kenesei (Research Institute for Linguistics of the Hungarian Academy of Sciences & University of Szeged)

Andrew Koontz-Garboden (The University of Manchester)

Helge Lødrup (University of Oslo)

Valéria Molnár (Lund University)

Louise Mycock (University of Oxford)

Péter Pelyvás (University of Debrecen)

Christopher Piñón (Université de Lille 3)

Adam Przepiórkowski (Polish Academy of Sciences & University of Warsaw)

Günter Radden (Universität Hamburg)  
Florian Schäfer (Universität Stuttgart)  
Peter Sells (The University of York)  
Peter Svenonius (University of Tromsø)  
Stephen Wechsler (The University of Texas at Austin)

Contact information:

Eva Kardos  
Email: [hungram@unideb.hu](mailto:hungram@unideb.hu)  
Workshop website: <http://was.unideb.hu>  
University of Debrecen  
Institute of English and American Studies  
Department of English Linguistics  
Debrecen, P.O. Box 73  
H-4010  
Hungary

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