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SHORT SCIENTIFIC REPORT

COST-STSM-ECOST-STSM-IC1207-200217-081754

HOST INSTITUTION

Department of Language and Linguistics at the University of Essex, England

TIMEFRAME

20 February – 6 March 2017

PURPOSE

The purpose of this STSM was to continue the work that Doug Arnold and I had carried out during and after my first STSM at the University of Essex. This work consisted in discussing his analysis of non-restrictive relative clauses (NRCs) as syntactically fully integrated units and my semantic representation (SR) account of semantically decomposable idioms (SDIs) like *pull strings* to then combine the two into an analysis of SDIs in NRCs formulated within a blend of Head-driven Phrase Structure Grammar (HPSG) and Lambda Discourse Representation Theory (λ-DRT) and turn the results into a poster bearing the title "Idiom Licensing in Non-restrictive Relative Clauses", which we presented at the 7th and final PARSEME general meeting in Dubrovnik.[1] We now intended to transform that poster into a short paper, which we would then develop into a longer and more detailed paper to be submitted to high-quality linguistic journals.

WORK CARRIED OUT

Compared to our plans, what we achieved was more limited, but may be of more lasting importance. Crucially, what this visit allowed us to discover was that the approach we had taken in our poster contained some questionable assumptions, most significantly the assumption that the combination of HPSG and λ-DRT results in a coherent semantic composition. This motivated us to look into semantic frameworks different from λ-DRT to find one that would harmonize better with HPSG. We landed on Lexical Resource Semantics (LRS) and did a close reading of the corresponding literature. We reviewed the relevant papers line by line and came up with a number of questions and comments, which we then discussed with the authors of the papers. I also worked on a new organization and formalization of the LRS-principles and started writing an introduction to LRS based on this new organization and formalization.

RESULTS

Thanks to the STSM, Doug and I gained a far deeper understanding of LRS. In particular, we now understand the architecture of the framework and how the different LRS-principles work and interact. On top of that, I was able to complete the proposal of a new organization and formalization of the LRS-principles, which I am currently discussing with the authors. The introduction to LRS is still in the making. As soon as it is complete, it will become part of my dissertation, in which I will make extensive use of my enriched knowledge of LRS.

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[1] see http://typo.uni-konstanz.de/parseme/images/STSM-reports/STSM%20Report%20Sascha%20Bargmann.pdf and
http://typo.uni-konstanz.de/parseme/images/Meeting/2016-09-26-Dubrovnik-meeting/WG1-ARNOLD-BARGMANN-A4-POSTER.pdf

Ongoing Collaboration with the Host Institution

As last time, the collaboration did not terminate with the end of my stay at the University of Essex. Doug and I intend to continue working on the aims of our initial work plan for this STSM during future mutual visits and online sessions. In fact, some of this interaction has already happened, as we were able to meet at a recent HPSG-workshop in Paris (24-25 April 2017) and will continue the collaboration when Doug visits Frankfurt for a workshop on relative clauses in May 2017.

Confirmation by the Host Institution

I confirm the successful execution of Sascha Bargmann's STSM at the Department of Language and Linguistics, University of Essex in February and March 2017. The activities Sascha undertook are as described above. As the report indicates, the stay was extremely useful – though the leading ideas of the collaboration remain valid, the extended time we had together allowed us to properly explore the formal details, expose their limitations, and come up with improvements. This work has laid the foundation for a formally more satisfying approach to the issues we are concerned with. It is important to stress that none of this would have been possible without the STSM.

The visit has further consolidated the collaboration between Language and Linguistics at Essex and IEAS at the Goethe University in Frankfurt. As in the previous visit, I was impressed and pleased at the way Sascha joined in with a wide range of activities. He was an active and very helpful presence in the Department.

Doug Arnold
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Frankfurt and Colchester, 30 March 2017