

## **A Core/Periphery Approach to the Functional Spectrum of Discourse Markers in Multimodal Context**

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The dissertation studies the verbal and nonverbal properties of multifunctional discourse markers (henceforth DMs) as well as explains their roles in the management of interaction from a discourse-pragmatic perspective. DMs are multifunctional pragmatic elements (of heterogeneous word classes) expressing various metacommunicative and cognitive functions. Successful communication requires the ability to infer the intended meaning of ambiguous communicative signals such as multifunctional DMs. It is argued in this work that a multimodal approach is indispensable in communication modelling (involving dialog modelling) in order to disambiguate the actual meaning or function of polysemous communicative signals such as DMs. The goal of the dissertation is twofold: firstly, to uncover the roles of DMs in fulfilling textual and interpersonal functions, expressing cognitive states, information states and interactional moves such as lexical search, uncertainty and topic shift; secondly, to identify verbal, sequential as well as machine-detectable nonverbal features that typically characterize and best distinguish these functions. Corpus collection and analysis is complemented with diachronic analysis so as to describe the historical development of certain lexical items into DMs as well as questionnaire work in order to map average language users' intuitions about the functions of DMs. The findings consequently contribute to the refinement of my proposed model that entirely and systematically describes the functional spectrum of DMs. The roles and functions verbal and nonverbal discourse markers play in indicating discourse structure and expressing pragmatic functions are examined in the Hungarian HuComTech multimodal corpus as well as in a collection of mediated political discourses. The corpus queries performed in the software ELAN 4.5.1 and their statistical analyses in SPSS 19.0 address the sequential, suprasegmental and nonverbal properties of the tokens of three selected discourse markers: *mondjuk* (~'say'), *ugye* (~'is that so?'), and *amúgy* (~'otherwise'). The features in question regard their context (lexical co-occurrences, presence or absence of surrounding silence), position in the utterance, prosodic features (duration, fundamental frequency, pitch movement) nonverbal-visual markers (facial expression, gaze direction and

the presence or absence of accompanying hand movements) and stylistic properties (frequency of use in different discourse genres, in informal conversations and political interviews). The findings suggest that the machine-detectable defining features distinguishing different functions are the position, duration of the DM, the simultaneous performance or cessation of manual gesticulation and the gaze direction of the speaker. These observations have led to the development of two decision trees which can distinguish between two salient functions of *mondjuk* (~'say') and *ugye* (~'is that so?') each, and may later be implemented as an algorithm.