1. Introduction

Motivations:
• there is an extremely complex relationship between the formal and functional properties of DMs (cf. Ajimer 2013: 18);
• the prosodic realization of DMs still doesn’t receive enough prominence in DM research (Wichmann et al. 2010: 103);
• there is general agreement in the literature that a contrastive analysis can help tease out the diversity of meaning relations that semantically bleached DMs mark (cf. Morter & Degand 2009).

Objectives:
• to identify the most relevant formal features of of course that help us disambiguate between textual and interpersonal as well as contrastive and non-contrastive functions;
• to use these formal features in order to model the basic discourse functions of of course via a decision tree, which can be tested on a larger corpus.

2. Research material: scripted dialogues

• LAC: First four seasons of House (also known as House M. D., © NBC Universal Television) transcripts rather than subtitles
• LBC: Hungarian translations (2 versions) transcripts of dubbed releases
• +637,000 words (=5% characters’ names and stage instructions)
• LAC + LBC = 2 aligned (SDL trads)
• 200 tokens of course (251 tokens per million words ~ 190 tpmws in NOSD)

Previous research on of course:
Lewis (2006): (1) emphatic yes, (2) concession, (3) background, (4) end of list
Aijmer & Simon-Vandenbergen (2004): (1) evidential, (2) interpersonal, (3) indeterminate
Furkó (2007): (1) attribution, (2) management, (3) information management, (4) structure, (4) interpersonal uses

Basic functions to be disambiguated in the corpus

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<th>Function</th>
<th>Sample utterances</th>
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<td>INTERP= (interpersonal and interactional function is more salient than textual function) 60% of tokens</td>
<td>Amy: I’m just a little nauseous I umm... I think I ate too much? Can we take a break? Henry: Of course.</td>
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<td>CONTR= (contrastive and concessive textual function including reformulation) 30% of tokens</td>
<td>Wilson: I’m not gonna date a patient’s daughter. House: Very ethical. Of course, most married men would say they don’t date at all.</td>
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<td>ADD (additive/non-contrastive textual function including result, elaboration and justification) 10% of tokens</td>
<td>Let’s see, your stomach has the deep-seated feelings of abandonment written all over it. She’s probably shouldn’t be here. Despite the fact that she is a more specific traumatic event, so I’m going to keep your room on the hospital with a cardiologist. And by cardiologist, of course I mean internist DTC deliver.</td>
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Marginal (interpersonal function is also salient): SPP+int. pros.+mid-turn


3. The functional spectrum of of course

previous research on of course:

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4. Annotation tags

Formal properties:
• Prosody (stress and integration)
• Relevant co-text (DM clusters, collocations)
• Speaker roles (doctor to doctor, doctor to patient, exchange with friends, etc.)
• Speech act of the host utterance / preceding utterance
• Position in the utterance (initial, medial, final)
• Position in the turn (initial, medial, final)
• The host unit’s position in conversational structure (second pair part/reaction/loose connection)

Functional properties:
• Textual functions (contrast, concession, addition, result, elaboration, justification)
• Stance (irony, boost, uncertainty)
• The annotator’s confidence in tagging the textual function of the DM
• The annotator’s confidence in tagging the speaker’s stance

5. Some results of the quantitative analysis

Steps of the analysis: Distinctive features of of course in order of importance / distinguishing power

1. host unit in an adjacency pair
2. prosody (integration)
3. position in turn
4. turn initial / final (2 TDMs)
5. prosody (stress)
6. Conclusions 1: A decision tree for the functional disambiguation between interpersonal and discursive uses of of course

6. Conclusions 2: A decision tree for the functional disambiguation between contrastive and additive (non-contrastive) uses of of course

7. Conclusions 2: A decision tree for the functional disambiguation between contrastive and additive (non-contrastive) uses of of course

References


Furkó, Péter Bálnint. 2015. Subjectification, Intersubjectification and Grammaticization, edited by Kristin Darden, Lauren Vendlerholt and Hubert Dupré. Dehavilland University, Saarbrücken.


