

Project EURO-XPRAG network, ESF visiting grant:

Learning about contrastive conjunctives from individuals with brain damage

N. Balaban, N. Friedmann (Tel-Aviv); Y. Winter (Utrecht)

Summary of short visit, January 2013, at Tel-Aviv University

Yoad Winter, Utrecht University

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This report sums up the academic work carried out during my visit at Dr. Friedmann's lab in Tel Aviv University, Israel, 1-4 January 2013.

This visit was conducted as part of the EURO-XPRAG network activities. The EURO-XPRAG network approved our research project "Learning about contrastive conjunctives from individuals with brain damage" in February 2012.

The funding we were awarded is to be used for three short visits between the researchers in Israel (Prof. Friedmann and Dr. Balaban) and myself in Utrecht.

This report sums up the second of the three planned visits.

1. Purpose of the visit

The aim of the visit was to continue the work with Prof. Friedmann and Dr. Balaban on use of contrastive conjunctives in individuals with brain damage, and their interaction with factivity in attitude reports.

2. Description of the work carried out during the visit

In the meetings with Friedmann and Balaban we developed a new version of pilot experiments with individuals suffering from brain damage in the right hemisphere and ensuing behavioral deficits in Theory of Mind (ToM).

The aim of these experiments is to test the usage of factive/non-factive verbs of propositional attitudes, and compare the subjects' understanding of factivity to their understanding of deep semantic distinctions between such verbs.

In addition, experiments were developed for testing behavior of contrastive conjunctions in relation to factivity.

3. Description of the main results obtained

Following our meetings, Dr. Balaban has continued working towards running the experiments on patients. The work in the meetings has led to the following results:

- a- A better notion of which experiments are likely to be most telling regarding the deficits that right hemisphere patients have in processing factivity and contrastivity.
- b- An inventory of factivity and contrastivity tests to be run on the patients.
- c- A collection of data from previous experiments run by Balaban that pertain to the main research questions.
- d- A first draft of a paper, describing the main research hypotheses and results obtained so far.

4. Future collaboration with host institution (if applicable)

This visit was conducted as part of the EURO-XPRAG network activities. According to the project plan funded by this network, we intended to carry out one more short visit during 2013, most likely in April/May.

The exact date and aims of the next visit will be considered in light of the first results we plan to collect during the next few months.

5. Projected publications / articles resulting or to result from the grant

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6. Other comments (if any).

Depending on the results obtained within the next few weeks, an abstract may be submitted to the next XPRAG meeting.