

DPs as complements to clause-taking predicates: constraints on reported speech events

Jane Grimshaw
(Rutgers University)

While they are often grouped together, e.g. as “attitude predicates”, lexical heads that combine with clausal complements fall into sharply distinct sub-types. An important case is the SAY verbs (Grimshaw 2015) which report speech acts (*ask, report, assert ...*). Their complementation options are governed by *Force Compatibility*, a hypothesis which reveals new generalizations about the lexical semantics of these verbs, their role in discourse, and the patterns of complementation that they participate in.

This proposal explains why the Q-Force verb *ask* combines with a variety of *wh* structures, with “concealed questions” such as *the price of the table*, and with DP complements headed by *question* but not *word, phrase, sentence* (#*She asked a few sentences*). Other speech act verbs, including the SAY-by-means verbs, cannot combine with *wh* subordinate clauses to report questions (*She mumbled how much the table cost* cannot report a question event), and they show the reverse of the *ask* pattern with DPs: #*She mumbled the price of the table* is not well-formed under a reported question reading yet *She mumbled a few sentences* is perfectly ordinary.

This research explores the connections between main clauses which are speech acts, the subordinate clauses which report speech events, and the individual words that participate in reporting speech events. The results suggest a single set of categories and principles of wellformedness which characterize the linguistic domain of SAY verbs and speech events.