

**GERMANY/HONG KONG JOINT RESEARCH SCHEME**  
**THE PROJECT REPORT**  
*(for Project Completion)*

Project Number: 9053008

G\_HK009/10

**Title**

Cross-linguistic Investigation into the Influence of Particles on Speech Acts

**Particulars**

	Hong Kong team				German team	
Name of Project Co-ordinator (with title)	Dr. Yurie Hara				Dr. Magdalena Kaufmann (formerly, Schwager)	
Name of Co-Investigator (if any)						
Institution or Institutional affiliation	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	CityU	<input type="checkbox"/>	HKU	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	University of Göttingen
	<input type="checkbox"/>	CUHK	<input type="checkbox"/>	HKUST	<input type="checkbox"/>	
	<input type="checkbox"/>	HKBU	<input type="checkbox"/>	LU	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Others: <u>University of Connecticut, USA</u>
	<input type="checkbox"/>	HKIEd	<input type="checkbox"/>	PolyU	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Other project team members (if any)	Ms. Yuli Feng, Ms. Mengxi Yuan				Dr. Sarah Zobel, Mr. Klaas Römer	

**Funding Period**

	1 <sup>st</sup> year	2 <sup>nd</sup> year (if applicable)
Start Date	1 January 2011	1 January 2012
Completion Date	31 December 2011	31 December 2012

**Objective(s) as per original application**

1. To investigate influence of particles on clause types
2. To reveal the licensing contexts and function of each particle in each language.
3. To obtain a better understanding of the universal principles of how natural language expressions are related to the speech acts for which they are used.

**i) Outline of proposed research and results obtained**

As laid out in the objectives above, the goal of the research is to investigate the function of particles, in particular their influence to the clause types and speech acts. The Hong Kong PI and her collaborators looked into the particles in Tokyo and Osaka Japanese and Mandarin Chinese used in assertions and questions. For instance, the particle *nen* in Osaka Japanese can be attached to a question and adds an assertive force to the presupposition of the question. The German PI and her collaborators looked into the German particles such as *ja*, *doch* and *wohl*. For instance, the German particles *ja* and *doch* can change the interpretation of impersonal interpreted pronouns. Also, the presupposition of *ja* is incompatible with imperatives while that of *doch* can co-occur with a performative modal and the inference that arises with *doch* is defeated.

**ii) Significance of research results**

Since the formal research on discourse particles is rather limited compared to other linguistic phenomena, identifying their functions and defining the semantics is already a great contribution to the formal semantics and pragmatics as well as language teaching. Furthermore, the research findings have important implication for theoretical questions. In particular, how should speech acts be formally represented? Do linguistic expressions encode default speech acts that can be further modified, e.g., by particles or intonation? In the findings of the Hong Kong team, clause types, i.e., syntactic or morphological expressions, directly encode speech acts and the presence of a particle or intonational contour can modify the function of the default speech acts.

**iii) Research output**

- Yurie Hara. "Evidentials: marking the source of information." To appear in Mouton Handbook of Japanese Semantics and Pragmatics.
- Yurie Hara. "Darou as a Deictic Context Marker" Oral presentation at Workshop "Relating Particles to Evidence and Inference." Göttingen, Germany, July 2012.
- Yurie Hara. Questions are immediate issues. under the second review, 2012.
- Yurie Hara, Shigeto Kawahara, and Yuli Feng. The prosody of enhanced bias in Mandarin and Japanese negative questions. under the second review, 2012.
- Yurie Hara and Tomohide Kinuhata. Osaka Japanese *nen*: One-sided public belief and paratactic association. *Sprache und Datenverarbeitung: International Journal for Language Data Processing*, pages 49-70, 2012.
- Mengxi Yuan and Yurie Hara. The syntax and semantics of Mandarin assertion modifiers *dique* and *zhende*. In *Proceedings of GLOW in Asia IX*, 2013.
- Mengxi Yuan and Yurie Hara. The semantics of Mandarin assertion modifiers *dique* and *zhende*. In *Proceedings of Sinn und Bedeutung 17*, To appear.
- Yurie Hara. On the interaction among sentence types, bias, and intonation: a rating study. In *Proceedings of Glow in Asia IX*, 2013.
- Yurie Hara and Christopher Davis. *Darou* as a deictic context shifter. In *Proceedings of Formal Approaches to Japanese Linguistics 6 (FAJL 6)*, 2013.
- Tomohide Kinuhata and Yurie Hara. Discourse update and semantic composition of particles: The case of *nen* in Osaka Japanese. In *Proceedings of Sinn und Bedeutung 16. MITWPL*, 2012.
- Yurie Hara "Semantic Composition of Intonation and Particles" Oral presentation at Workshop "Speech Acts and Particles 2" City University of Hong Kong, October 2011.
- Yurie Hara "Semantics and Pragmatics of Intonation and Particles" Oral presentation at Hiroshima University, Japan, July 2011.
- Yurie Hara, Shigeto Kawahara, and Yuli Feng. Emphatic stress as epistemic conflict: A case study of Mandarin Chinese. In *Proceedings of Logic and Engineering of Natural Language Semantics 8 (LENLS8)*, pages 13-26, 2011.
- Yurie Hara and Shigeto Kawahara. The prosody of public evidence in Japanese: A rating study. In *Proceedings of 29th West Coast Conference on Formal Linguistics (WCCFL29)*. Cascadilla Press, 2012.
- Sarah Zobel "The connection between German discourse particles and impersonally interpreted personal pronouns". Presented at Workshop on Speech Acts and Particles 2, October 14, 2011. Hong Kong, China.
- Sarah Zobel (2012) *Impersonally Interpreted Personal Pronouns*, University of Goettingen.
- Kaufmann, Magdalena and Stefan Kaufmann (2012) Epistemic Particles and Performativity. *Proceedings of SALT 22*.
- Cariani, Fabrizio, Kaufmann, Magdalena and Stefan Kaufmann (accepted) Deliberative Modality under Epistemic Uncertainty Accepted for publication in *Linguistics & Philosophy*.
- Kaufmann, Magdalena (t.a. 2013) Satztypen des Deutschen. In: Altmann, Hans, Joerg Meibauer and Markus Steinbach. Berlin: de Gruyter.

**Potential for or impact on further research collaboration**

Both Hong Kong and German teams have revealed various functions of different particles in Japanese, Mandarin Chinese and German with respect to the speech acts, yet the teams have not been able to unify the findings across the languages. That is, the next step pertains to identify the universal principles of discourse particles and clause types, as listed in objective 3 above. Revealing the universal properties of the particles will shed new light of the theoretical semantics and pragmatics.