

---

## Register variation in the use of DRDs in argumentative texts

---

Ines Rehbein

Leibniz ScienceCampus, IDS Mannheim / Universität Heidelberg

rehbein@cl.uni-heidelberg.de

Freitag  
10.03.2017  
12:30 – 13:00  
B4 1, 0.04

This contribution studies the use of discourse relational devices (DRDs) in argumentative texts in different communicative settings. By DRDs we refer to linguistic devices that are used to structure and organise the discourse, such as discourse connectives, adverbials, or linguistic cue phrases. DRDs are highly ambiguous and polyfunctional and can vary across different dimensions, depending on the medium (spoken vs. written), the discourse situation (monologic vs. dialogic, formal vs. informal), the purpose of communication, and more. Recent work on argumentation mining has pointed out the important role of DRDs for analysing argumentation structure (Eckert-Kohler et al. 2015). Our main interest is in investigating how the different dimensions of variation can impact the linguistic behaviour of an individual speaker during the production of argumentative texts. The data we use in our analysis are political articles, interviews and talks by the same author, Noam Chomsky. Our data covers spoken and written texts and ranges from highly edited to less edited, including monologic as well as dialogic data.

We follow the tradition of Biber's register analysis (Biber 1995) and perform a Principal Component Analysis (PCA), based on raw counts of word forms of DRDs, to identify the main variables of variance. The PCA allows us to identify DRDs typical for written articles and those that are used in the less edited, dialogic interview data.

To investigate how the different distribution of DRDs reflects different strategies used to pursue a communicative purpose, we provide an analysis of discourse relations according to Prasad et al. (2008), with a focus on causal relations such as Cause and Result which play a crucial role in argumentation.

**References:** • Biber, D. (1995): *Dimensions of register variation: A cross-linguistic comparison*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press. Amsterdam: Elsevier. • Eckle-Kohler, J., Kluge, R., & Gurevych, I. (2015): On the Role of Discourse Markers for Discriminating Claims and Premises in Argumentative Discourse. In: *LREC 2015*, 2249–2255. Lisbon, Portugal. • Prasad, R., et al. (2008): The Penn Discourse Treebank 2.0. In: *LREC 2008*, 2961–2968. Marrakech, Morocco.

AG13