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## Small building blocks, multiple threads, and large repercussions

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In this talk, I ask two fundamental questions about where discourse relations can hold: First, within sentences, can small subsentential elements stand in a discourse relation with other elements of the sentence? Second, across sentences, can multiple relations be inferred to hold between the same pair of sentences? These questions and their repercussions extend beyond the analysis of discourse structure itself into syntactic parsing, pronoun interpretation, and the meaning of particular discourse connectives. The studies I report draw on a range of methodologies, from story continuations to reading time to eye-tracking to large-scale crowd-sourced annotation.

When we point to examples of discourse relations, we typically point to relations that hold between sentences. These intersentential connections include a(n admittedly controversial) number of different types: Some relations rely on causal reasoning; others depend on the inference of parallelism; still others describe a sequence of events, etc. However, the size of the segments between which relations can be inferred need not be restricted to full sentences. If a discourse relation operates within the sentence—for example, between a matrix and relative clause—this creates an opportunity for structural factors to interact with pragmatics in a way that is not possible for intersentential relations. The studies reported here draw attention to the interdependence of syntactic parsing and discourse parsing.

In a parallel vein, when we talk about discourse relations, we typically divide the space of possibilities into cases in which the relation is marked explicitly and cases in which the relation is left to inference. Based on a new large-scale dataset with over 50 discourse adverbials, I show that this is not an exclusive *or*: A conjunction can often be inferred alongside an explicit discourse adverbial, revealing in some cases multiple concurrent relations.

Lastly, I consider different discourse frameworks and the parallels that can be drawn between models that rely on an inventory of relevance relations and models that posit the inference of questions under discussion. As an example, I test how intonation can help signal that a particular question is being addressed, thereby changing expectations about the operative discourse rela-

tion and indirectly influencing other pragmatic phenomena.