Epistemic and evidential constructions in stance-taking: A quantitative discourse approach

Pöldvere, Nele; Glynn, Dylan

2013

Link to publication

Citation for published version (APA):

General rights
Unless other specific re-use rights are stated the following general rights apply:
Copyright and moral rights for the publications made accessible in the public portal are retained by the authors and/or other copyright owners and it is a condition of accessing publications that users recognise and abide by the legal requirements associated with these rights.
• Users may download and print one copy of any publication from the public portal for the purpose of private study or research.
• You may not further distribute the material or use it for any profit-making activity or commercial gain
• You may freely distribute the URL identifying the publication in the public portal

Read more about Creative commons licenses: https://creativecommons.org/licenses/

Take down policy
If you believe that this document breaches copyright please contact us providing details, and we will remove access to the work immediately and investigate your claim.
Epistemic and evidential constructions in stance-taking. A quantitative discourse approach
Nele Pöldvere and Dylan Glynn
Lund University and University of Paris VIII

This study compares two verb-based constructions: the 1st person epistemic [think (that)] and the 3rd person evidential [seems (that)]. Although the two forms are semantically distinct, functionally they are comparable, both used to express a speaker’s stance with respect to a given proposition (Biber and Finegan 1989, Kärkkäinen 2003, Aijmer 2009). Our hypothesis is that the choice between the two forms will, in part, be determined by relative social rank between the interlocutors.

A sample of 700 examples of the two constructions were extracted from an Internet bulletin board. Different statuses on the bulletin board, from casual senders through moderators, permit the operationalisation of social rank as a factor in constructional choice. The study employs the behavioural profile approach (Geeraerts et al. 1994, Gries 2003). Drawing on previous research in epistemic and evidential constructions, the sample is manually annotated for a range of formal, semantico-pragmatic and social factors. Multivariate statistics are then used to model the results of the analysis in an effort to identify which usage patterns predict the choice of construction. Using mixed effects logistic regression, the results demonstrate that social rank does play a role in the choice, but that this effect is dependant on a range of semantico-pragmatic factors.

References