Connecting to Illocutionary Force A theoretical and experimental study of the German discourse particle denn Josef Bayer, Markus Bader, Jana Häussler & Simon Hopp

Discourse particles are classically root phenomena because they are licensed by Force. As such they appear at a minimal distance from the left clausal edge in which Force is represented. This study focuses on the particle *denn* (related to English *then*) in German interrogatives but will also turn to other particles which can appear in interrogatives such as *schon*, *nur* and *wohl*.

In the first part of the talk, we will give a brief introduction to the syntax and semantics of this particle. *Denn* introduces a contextualization that requires a particular common ground between speaker and hearer: "given the actual circumstances known to both speaker and hearer". As a result, questions with *denn* are felt to express an enforced attitude of being concerned about the answer.

- (1) a. Wo wohnst du?

 where live you

 "Where do you live"
- b. Wo wohnst du denn?where live you DENN"Where do you live? (I am wondering)"

In spite of its usual root-orientedness, *denn* may also show up in the scope of a propositional attitude verb.

(2) Wie denkst du, dass es **denn** weitergehen soll mit euch? how think you that it DENN go-on should with you "How do you think that the two of you should carry on? (I'm wondering)" http://mein-kummerkasten.de/142829/fremdgehen.html.

The question is how *denn* is licensed in the embedded non-interrogative clause. We hypothesize that it is locally licensed by the wh-element that passes through SpecCP of the embedded clause before it moves to the matrix clause. If no such local licensing can be established, we predict an ungrammatical result.

Judgments in this area being subtle, in the second part two experiments will be reported in which this prediction was approached with the *Magnitude Estimation* (ME) method. Experiment I uses long wh-movement, Experiment II uses partial movement. Both experiments show that speakers are sensitive to locality violations in the long-distance licensing of *denn*. The result rests crucially on cyclic movement and should therefore be seen as novel evidence in favor of movement that leaves a copy in SpecCP.

In the third part, a number of extensions will be discussed in which interactions between *denn* and further question-sensitive particles play a role. It will be shown among other things that the surface position of the particle determines its scope unless the particle forms a constituent with the Wh-phrase and moves along with it as in:

(3) [Wann **schon**] glaubst du, dass er [wann **schon**] jemals gearbeitet hat?

when SCHON believe you that he ever worked has

"When do you think he has ever worked? – He never did."