

## Interpretation of copredicative sentences

Copredication occurs when the same polysemous nominal expression comes along with simultaneous predications selecting for two different senses of the word in a sentence:

- (1) The school caught fire and was celebrating 4<sup>th</sup> of July when the fire started.
- (2) The city has 500,000 inhabitants and outlawed smoking in bars last year (Asher 2011)

In (1) ‘school’ takes two different senses: *building*, and “*participants*”. In (2) ‘city’ takes the senses *place* and *council*.

In this talk, I explain (i) why some senses allow co-predication and others do not, and (ii) how we interpret co-predicative sentences.

Some authors argue that senses that copredicate denote constitutive parts of complex entities (Arapinis & Vieu, 2015; Gotham, 2016). However, they need specific conditions why some entities are complex and others are not.

The proposal is that different senses of a word are aspects of a conceptual structure that denote simple entities that are linked by explanatory/realization relations. For example, the structure of ‘school’ represents that a school is, prototypically, an educative institution. As institutions, schools require buildings (physical-realization); social organizations and representations (social-realization); and students and teachers (participants) that participate in the educating process (temporal-realization).

When the reader reads (1), the word 'school' activates the conceptual structure. The predicate ‘caught fire’ selects the *building* aspect of ‘school’, the other senses are all still active when the reader encounters ‘was celebrating 4<sup>th</sup> of July’, and the aspect *participants* is selected. So, (1) could be paraphrased as follows:

- (3) The school {physical-realization of a school-institution} caught fire and {the group of participants of the institution} was celebrating 4<sup>th</sup> of July when the fire started.

Summarizing: The response to (i) is that related senses of a noun allow copredication when the entities they denote are linked by explanatory/realization relations. The response to (ii) is that interpreting copredicative sentences involves a process of sense de-compilation from the copredicative noun and sense selection from the structure.

### References:

- Arapinis, A. and Vieu, L. (2015). A plea for complex categories in ontologies. *Applied Ontology* 10, 285-296.
- Asher, N. (2011). *Lexical Meaning in Context*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Gotham, M. (2016). Composing criteria of individuation in copredication. *Journal of Semantics*, 34(2), 333-371.