Homonymous discourse particles

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Abstract

In this text, I consider the properties of the particle Že in Czech reprise questions. First, I consider Že in wh-questions. While authors agree that it links the given utterance to the immediately preceding discourse, some assume that Že is located in SpecCP and others that it is located in C. I use novel data to demonstrate that the two assumptions about the particle’s distribution are not mutually exclusive. I claim that there are two types of Že: the phrase-internal Že (which is restricted to occur within SpecCP) and the phrase-external Že (which is restricted to occur in C). Combining this dual analysis of Že with some further assumptions makes it possible to account for the distribution of the particle in a variety of constructions. Second, I consider Že in non-wh-questions. It turns out that Že in these questions has the properties of the phrase-external Že. This further supports the validity of the distinction between the phrase-internal Že and the phrase-external Že.