

Referring Expressions, Pragmatics and Style

Reference is a major theme in the study of language and language use. Providing a relevance-theoretic account of reference resolution, this book develops our understanding of procedurally encoded meaning by exploring its function and role in reference resolution. A range of referring expressions are discussed, including definite descriptions, demonstratives and pronouns. Existing work on the pragmatics of reference has largely focused on how reference is resolved. However, speakers can do much more than just secure reference when they use a referring expression. A speaker's choice of expression might communicate information about their attitudes and their emotions, and referring expressions can also be used to create stylistic and poetic effects. The analyses in this book widen the focus to consider these broader effects, and the discussions and arguments presented take seriously the idea that referring expressions can contribute to meaning and communication in a way that goes beyond reference.

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Reference and Beyond

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