

# University of Massachusetts Occasional Papers in Linguistics

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Volume 26 *University of Massachusetts  
Occasional Papers in Linguistics -- Vol 23:  
Issues in Semantics*

Article 1

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2000

## Front Matter

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Kusumoto, Kiyomi and Villalta, Elisabeth (2000) "Front Matter," *University of Massachusetts Occasional Papers in Linguistics*: Vol. 26 , Article 1.

Available at: <https://scholarworks.umass.edu/umop/vol26/iss3/1>

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Kusumoto and Villalta: Front Matter

University of Massachusetts Occasional Papers in Linguistics  
Volume 23

# Issues in Semantics

**Edited by**

**Kiyomi Kusumoto and Elisabeth Villalta**

GLSA

University of Massachusetts, Amherst

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## PREFACE

We are pleased to present a new collection of working papers from the Linguistics Department at the University of Massachusetts at Amherst. The papers in this volume discuss a variety of semantic phenomena, ranging from phenomena related to clausal interpretation such as tense, aspect and mood, to phenomena related to Noun Phrase interpretation such as contrastive focus, specificity, genericity, partitivity, pronominal reference and scope.

At the beginning, this project was intended to be about 'Semantics and its Interfaces'. We were hoping that growing interest in how Semantics affects and interacts with related areas would give rise to an interdisciplinary collection of papers. However, the papers that we received were mostly concerned with developing formal proposals for particular semantic phenomena. Hence, the volume turned into a 'Semantics' volume. What this collection of papers suggests instead is that there is an increasing interest in crosslinguistic examination of well known semantic phenomena. The papers presented in this study examine a variety of languages, such as African American English, Brazilian Portuguese, French, Hungarian, English, Japanese, Polish, St'átimcets, Spanish, Russian, and Yiddish.

As is well known bringing together a volume of working papers is a difficult and endless process. We are aware of the fact that the last collection of working papers in Semantics in our department dates back to 1989! If we remember correctly, the first plan to edit this Semantics volume dates back to 1994, initiated by Maribel Romero and Satoshi Tomioka. Since then, the editors have changed several times and this project has taken much longer than any of us would have ever thought. Nevertheless, this arduous process has finally been very fruitful. We are delighted to present as many as thirteen contributions from students, faculty and visitors that have been present in this department in the last few years. Many thanks to all the authors that contributed to this project. Our sincere apologies go to those among them that gave us their papers when we requested them initially, namely in December 1998. We wish to express our gratitude to Barbara Partee for providing financial support and would like to thank Caroline Jones and Mako Hirofani for final editorial assistance.

Kiyomi Kusumoto  
Elisabeth Villalta

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