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Cahiers de lexicologie

La sémantique en France :
un état des lieux

Sous la direction de Jean-Claude Anscombre
et Juliette Delahaie



Sémantique lexicale et phrastique : le sens compositionnel revisité

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- **Author:** Tamba (Irène)
- **Abstract:** This article questions the application of the notion of literal meaning to sentence semantics. A short historical overview confirms the ambiguity of such a notion used to account at once for the different semantic values of words out of context and for their meaning in discourse, and advocates a better differentiation between word semantics and sentence semantics. A goal that can be reached if the notion of literal meaning is reserved for lexical items and the notion of compositional meaning is specified for sentences. Finally, a thorough examination of the so-called *principle of compositionality* within the framework of formal semantics reveal the vagueness of its definition and explains the permanent conflict with the *principle of contextuality*.
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