

## What do verbal tenses communicate? by François Heenen

### LIDILE Mondays

« What do verbal tenses communicate? »

**François Heenen, Lecturer at the University of Iceland**

*What do verb tenses communicate? by François Heenen* François Heenen has been a lecturer at the University of Iceland since 1993, first in the Department of General Linguistics and then in the Department of French. He holds a doctorate in comparative Indo-European grammar from the University of Vienna in Austria, and has always been interested in the semantics of the verb, as indicated by the subject of his thesis, which focused on a category of verb in Vedic called the desiderative. His current research focuses on the analysis of French grammatical tenses, past and future tenses. His approach to semantics has always been influenced by the cognitive sciences, in particular the relevance theory of Dan Sperber and Deirdre Wilson.

In this paper, François Heenen proposes to argue the hypothesis that the main tenses of the French past, the *passé simple*, the *passé composé*, the *plus-que-parfait* and the *imparfait*, serve to communicate different meta-cognitive feelings about memory work. This hypothesis will be defended within the framework of existing theories on the semantic function of these tenses and in particular in relation to the procedural approach. Another more general hypothesis will also be discussed, according to which the so-called procedural units in natural languages serve to enable speakers to represent the monitoring and control they have over the communication.

**Villejean Campus - 1:45 PM - 3:45 PM - Room L201**

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