

## Semantic Extension of After All: Concession and Justification

大津, 隆広  
九州大学大学院言語文化研究院

<https://hdl.handle.net/2324/2004802>

---

出版情報 : 2005-07-10. International Pragmatics Association  
バージョン :  
権利関係 :

## **Semantic Extension of *After All*: Concession and Justification**

**Takahiro Otsu**

**Faculty of Languages and Cultures**

**Kyushu University, Japan**

A concessive use of 'after all' has been conventionally associated with a different meaning from a justificatory use and the connection between them has not been sufficiently investigated. Typical examples are:

- (1) I had a cold and wanted to see my doctor, but I didn't get to see him after all.
- (2) Anna should get a promotion; after all, she has published two books.

A two-term account for the respective meaning of 'after all' has made the difference between the two uses more remarkable. A concessive 'after all' in (1), which indicates denial of expectations, is used in the situation where one thing is expected, but the opposite occurs (Schourup and Waida (1988)). This account is based on a contradictory relation between two assumptions: previous assumption and conclusion. On the other hand, some Relevance-theoretic literature (e.g. Blakemore (1987), Blakemore (1992), Rouchota (1998)) has an exclusive focus on a justificational 'after all' in (2). The Relevance-theoretic assumption that the proposition introduced by it is interpreted as evidence for the proposition in the preceding clause: such account is based upon another pair of two logical terms, conclusion and evidence.

This presentation attempts a unified account of the polysemous use of 'after all' based on the assumption that a concessive and a justificational use of the connective are both derived from the literal meaning 'after all has been considered' or 'after all is said and done', and that they are both interpreted in the schema involving three logical terms (previous assumption, conclusion, and evidence). The literal use of 'after all' is conceptual in that it can be predicted from the meaning of the words 'after' ('temporal' preposition) and 'all' (universal quantifier). The temporality inherent in this connective has gradually given way to causality or conditionality, presumably in parallel with a semantic shift of the preposition 'after'.

It will be proposed here that the referent of "all which should be considered" and the way of accessing it in discourse motivate semantic extension from a concessive use to a justificational use, which is also characterized by Traugott (1995) as subjectification. In a concessive use (1), a universal quantifier 'all' is expected to refer to every piece of evidence for introducing a conclusion. However, the search for sufficient evidence does not succeed because the conclusion expressed indicates the result of an event or a final solution, which are both essentially irrelevant to the issue of whether evidence for the conclusion is available or not: in most cases, an unavoidable external factor is implicated. In a justificational use (2), in order for a personal, evaluative conclusion to be accepted, a specific piece of evidence should be inevitably made explicit. Accordingly, 'after all' seems to have become a means of locating, as a result of considering all the evidence, the relevant piece of evidence for supporting such a conclusion.

<https://cdn.ymaws.com/pragmatics.international/resource/collection/C57D1855-A3BB-40D8-A977-4732784F7B21/9th%20IPC%20program-Riva%20de1%20Garda.pdf>