

Philosophy of Language: Semantics and Pragmatics
PHIL G9485
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Daniel Rothschild

SYLLABUS

We will look at recent work on some topics at the intersection of semantics and pragmatics. First, we'll begin surveying some foundational work in semantics and pragmatics. After this we'll spend a few weeks each on: presupposition, scalar implicature, and unarticulated constituents. Two additional possible topics (if time permits) are: wide-scope indefinites and donkey anaphora. Anyone with particular interests in related areas are welcome to suggest topics or readings which can be substituted for existing topics.

Requirements:

E-credit: attendance, readings, participation, short assignments, paper(s)—one long one or two “squibs.”

R-credit: attendance, readings, participations, short assignments.

Prerequisites: symbolic logic or, at the least, willingness to deal with lots of fairly technical material.

Reference books:

Heim and Kratzer, *Semantics in Generative Grammar*

Kadmon, *Formal Pragmatics*

I

What is Semantics: the truth-conditional project:

Larson and Segal, *Knowledge of Meaning*, Chapter 1+2

David Lewis, *General Semantics* (unlike Lewis, you can stop at p. 217 when he says “we could stop here”)

Optional: Harman, “Meaning and Semantics” in *Reasoning, Meaning and Mind* (online through CLIO)

Pragmatics

Lewis, *Scorekeeping in a language game*

Stalnaker, “Pragmatics” in *Context and Content*.

Optional useful background article: <http://plato.stanford.edu/entries/pragmatics/>

II

Presupposition (foundations)

Soames, *Presupposition* 1989.

Stalnaker, *Pragmatic presuppositions*

Stalnaker, Common Ground (find via google scholar)

Optional:

Kai von Stechow, What is Presupposition Accommodation

<http://web.mit.edu/fintel/www/accomm.pdf>

Presupposition Projection

Heim, On the projection problem for presuppositions

Schlenker, Be Articulate

http://www.linguistics.ucla.edu/people/schlenker/Be_Articulate.pdf

Optional: Heim, Presupposition Projection (1990)

<http://semanticsarchive.net/Archive/GFiMGNjN/Presupp%20projection%2090.pdf>

Presupposition and Definite Descriptions

Strawson, On Referring

Heim, Articles and Definiteness (selection)

Optional: Rothschild, Presuppositions and Scope

III

Scalar Implicatures: grounding

Gamut, *Logic Language Meaning* (1991) 204-209

Grice, selections

Fox, Free Choice and the Theory of Scalar Implicatures, p 1-9 only

http://web.mit.edu/linguistics/www/fox/free_choice.pdf

Optional: Horn, Implicature http://www.yale.edu/linguist/faculty/doc/horn_implic.pdf

Embedded Implicature, Exhaustivity Operators

Schulz & Van Roooy, Pragmatic Meaning and Non-monotonic Reasoning

<http://staff.science.uva.nl/~vanrooy/exhLPNewer.pdf>

Sauerland, Scalar Implicatures in Complex Sentences (via google scholar)

Scalar Implicatures: Numbers and Children

Fox and Hackl, The Universal Density of Measurement

Noveck, When Children Are More Logical Than Adults

Scalar Implicatures and Negative Polarity

Krifka, The Semantics and Pragmatics of Polarity Items

<http://amor.rz.hu-berlin.de/~h2816i3x/POLARITY.pdf>

Chierchia, Scalar Implicature, Polarity Phenomena, and the Syntax/Pragmatics Interface

<http://scholar.google.com/url?sa=U&q=http://www.mit.edu/afs/athena/course/24/24.954/OldFiles/www/files/chierchia.scalarimplicature.pdf>

IV

Truth-conditional pragmatics

Carston, The semantics/pragmatics distinction: a view from relevance theory

<http://www.cs.brandeis.edu/~jamesp/classes/cs216/Carston-RelevanceTheory.pdf>

Bach, Conversational Implicature

<http://userwww.sfsu.edu/~kbach/implicature.htm>

Variables and binding

Background: <http://plato.stanford.edu/entries/indexicals/>

Stanley, Context and Logical Form

A case study: “red”

Reimer, Do Adjectives Conform to Compositionality

Szabo, Adjectives in Context

Location

Neale, On Location

Recanati, It’s Raining (somewhere)

http://jeannicod.ccsd.cnrs.fr/docs/00/08/34/83/RTF/It_is_raining15REVISED29.rtf

V. Further alternative topics:

Wide-scope indefinites (Fodor and Sag, Ludlow and Neale, Schwarzschild, Schlenker)

Donkey Anaphora (Evans, Heim 1990, Elbourne)