Lecture 12: Introduction to Pragmatics and its History

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0. Syntax, Semantics, Pragmatics.

The term “pragmatics” is due to Charles Morris (1938). Within semiotics, the general science of signs (which applies to both natural languages, artificial languages, and possibly other ‘sign systems’), Morris distinguished three branches: syntax, the study of “the formal relation of signs to one another”, semantics, the study of “the relations signs to the objects to which the signs are applicable” (their designata), and pragmatics, the study of “the relations of signs to interpreters” (1938, p.6), quoted from (Levinson 1983, p.1). On this view, syntax concerns properties of expressions, such as well-formedness; semantics concerns relations between expressions and what
they are “about”, such as reference and truth-conditions; pragmatics concerns relations among expressions, meanings, and uses in context, such as implicature.

Good sources for history of pragmatics: (Atlas 2006, Horn 1990, Horn 1989, Horn 2005, Thomason 1990). Larry Horn’s work is particularly valuable, both because he is a leading figure in pragmatics and because he digs deeply into the history of everything he works on. Jay Atlas’s paper gives a good picture of the intermixture of pragmatics in Generative Semantics, and lively debates about semantics and pragmatics in linguistics starting in the 1960’s.

A good textbook for formal semantics and pragmatics for beginners is (Chierchia and McConnell-Ginet 1990): they alternate chapters on semantics and chapters on pragmatics, and they only introduce as much formalism as is absolutely necessary, with lots of explanations. And it is an insightful book with interesting ideas for professionals as well as for students.

Much recent work challenges the sharp distinction between semantics and pragmatics implied by the traditional trichotomy. The subdiscipline of formal pragmatics is concerned especially with issues where semantics and pragmatics overlap. Kadmon (2002) and Potts (2005) are good examples of work in formal semantics and pragmatics; Kadmon’s book has a large section on presuppositions (which we discuss in Section 3) and a large section on “association with focus”. Potts investigates conventional implicatures (Section 4 below), and argues that they are a special part of semantics. We begin with some aspects of pragmatics that are not “formal pragmatics”, but are classic and important for formal semantics and pragmatics, based on the work of Grice (1975); we include some of the historical controversies that motivated Grice’s work.

1. Grice’s Conversational Implicatures.

1.1. Motivation and History. Questions about the meanings of logical words.

Before H.P. Grice (1913 -1988), in fact from Aristotle into the 20th century, there were ongoing disputes about the meanings of various logical words (and not only those) such as “some”, “the”, “and”, “or”, “not”, “if-then”. These disputes concerned both what meanings should be given to the corresponding operators in logical systems, and what meanings such words have in ordinary language. As we discussed earlier, logicians like Russell considered natural language vague and imprecise and took logical language as an improved “regimentation”; Russell’s analysis of the definite article was a case in point.

As an example, let’s consider “some”, and the question of whether (1a) implies (1b). As discussed in (Horn 1990), Aristotle in De Interpretatione and in the Prior Analytics took those two to be opposed “in name only”.

1 a. Some men are white.

b. Not every man is white. Aristotle

Verbally four kinds of opposition are possible, viz. universal affirmative to universal negative [A/E], universal affirmative to particular negative [A/O], particular affirmative to universal negative [I/E], and particular affirmative to particular negative [I/O]: but really there are only three: for the particular affirmative is only verbally opposed to the particular negative. (Prior Analytics 63b21, emphasis added)

As Horn (1990) reports, “It was five centuries later before the square of opposition came along, and with it the topographic term SUBCONTRARY for this relation: the subcontraries appear beneath the contraries.
The (neo-) Gricean version of the square of opposition is presented below in () (also from Horn). In the square, according to the logic that is standard today, contradictories cannot both be true and cannot both be false; contraries cannot both be true, but can both be false. Each ‘subaltern’ is unilaterally entailed by its ‘superaltern’. And in standard logic, the subcontraries cannot both be false but can both be true. But the relations involving the I and O statements have been controversial for centuries.

(2) The traditional Square of Opposition

The same square of opposition can be used for the modal terms necessary (A), impossible (E), possible (I), possibly not, not necessary (O), for the temporal quantifiers always, never, sometimes, sometimes not, and in a number of other domains. Linguists have been interested in the fact that while natural languages often have one-word expressions for the A, E, and I members of such oppositions, they never have a one-word expression for the O term. Horn’s lifelong interest in the relation between semantics and pragmatics began with his dissertation (Horn 1972), which includes a study of that linguistic generalization and an explanation in pragmatic terms that is not unrelated to what he calls the “turbulent history” of the subcontrary relation.

As Horn reports (p.455), Avicenna advocated the modern view a thousand years ago:

> If you say “some men are so-and-so”, it is not necessary that some others are not so-and-so. If the proposition is about all, it is also about some.
>  
> (Avicenna (ibn-Sina)/Zabeh 1971: 24)

But the view that “some” implies “not all” was argued for repeatedly over the centuries. There are disputes about whether Aristotle held such a view; Horn doesn’t think so.

> Priority evidently belongs instead to the 5th-6th century Buddhist logician Dīnāga and his colleagues who, in their hetu-cakra or Wheel of Reasons,
>  
> do not admit four kinds of proposition like Aristotle and the Scholastics, but only three, since they interpret ‘Some S is P’ not as ‘at least some’ but as ‘at least some and not all’...This would give a logical triangle in place of the western logical square. (Bochenski 1961: §53.14; cf. Tucci 1928)

Such a “triangle of opposition” was argued for by Sir William Hamilton in the mid-19th century, but forcefully opposed by de Morgan (this is all from Horn 1990 and 2004), who showed the logical incoherence that such a view gets into (if ‘all’ implies ‘some’, and ‘some’ in turn implies ‘not all’, then ‘all’ implies ‘not all’, which no one would defend), and also gave ‘proto-Gricean’ explanations of why it is so natural to think that ‘some’ means ‘some but not all’.

From (Horn 2004) citing (Hamilton 1860), (de Morgan 1847), (Mill 1867):
Sir William Hamilton (1860: 254) distinguishes two senses of some, the indefinite (at least some) and the semi-definite (some but not all), taking the latter as basic: “Some, if not otherwise qualified, means some only – this by presumption.” While acknowledging that such a presumption holds in “common language,” De Morgan (1847) offers a proto-Gricean argument for rejecting Hamilton’s thesis in favor of the standard practice of relegating the some → not all inference to an extra-logical domain, as does Mill (1867: 501):

No shadow of justification is shown . . . for adopting into logic a mere sous-entendu of common conversation in its most unprecise form. If I say to any one, “I saw some of your children today”, he might be justified in inferring that I did not see them all, not because the words mean it, but because, if I had seen them all, it is most likely that I should have said so: even though this cannot be presumed unless it is presupposed that I must have known whether the children I saw were all or not.

These explanations are all forerunners of Grice’s “first maxim of quantity”: “Make your contribution as informative as is required (for the current purposes of the exchange)”, from Grice’s William James lectures (Grice 1975 (originally 1967)). As Horn notes, the earliest version of this maxim in print is given by Strawson in (Strawson 1952) as a “general rule of linguistic conduct”, but with credit for it given to “Mr. H.P. Grice”:

One should not make the (logically) lesser, when one could truthfully (and with greater or equal clarity) make the greater claim.

A word about Grice. H.P. Grice (known as Paul Grice) (1913 -1988) was a British philosopher of language who studied at Oxford and taught at Oxford until 1967, then moved to the U.S. and taught at U.C. Berkeley until his death. His teachers at Oxford included many of the notable ordinary language philosophers. Grice is famous for many things, but among linguists, he is definitely most famous for his “conversational maxims”, often called “Gricean maxims”, which he used to help explain the differences between “linguistic meaning” and “speaker’s meaning”, the difference between what is literally said in a sentence and what may be communicated by the use of that sentence in a given context.

Grice was working at the time of the debates between Russell and Strawson, who agreed that there was a big mismatch between natural language and formal logic, but disagreed about whether the way to do philosophical argumentation was to replace natural language by a logical language (Russell), or to pay more attention to the subtleties of natural language (Strawson).

Grice does not take sides in this debate; he challenges its common presupposition. He believes that the meanings of the operators of standard logic are quite close to the meanings of their natural language counterparts. The reason for the widespread belief to the contrary, he argued, was a failure to distinguish between semantics and pragmatics, a failure to distinguish between the literal semantic content of a sentence (“what is literally said by a sentence”) and a variety of further kinds of pragmatic inferences that may reasonably be drawn from the speaker’s use of that sentence in a particular context.

An example:

(3) A: How is C getting along in his new job at the bank?
   B: Oh, quite well, I think; he likes his colleagues, and he hasn’t been to prison yet.

What B implied, suggested, or meant is distinct from what B said. All B said was that C had not been to prison yet.
1.2. Truth-conditional content (semantics) vs. Conversational Implicatures (pragmatics).

Grice’s new terms: *implicate, implicature*. “Implicate” is meant to cover the family of uses of “imply”, “suggest”, “mean” illustrated above. Things that follow from what a sentence literally “says” or asserts are called *entailments*; so the major distinction Grice is drawing is between (semantic) entailments and (pragmatic) implicatures. B’s sentence in (3) entails that C is not in prison; it *conversationally implicates* that C may have a tendency toward criminal behavior.

**Example: How many and’s?**

(4) (a) Mary got married and had a baby.
(b) Mary had a baby and got married.
(c) Mary got married. She had a baby.
(d) Mary got married and had a baby, although not in that order.

(5) Tests proved that Jones was the author of the pamphlet() and
(a) he was sent to jail.
(b) he was awarded the prize.

There have been proposals that *and* is ambiguous among “logical and”, *and then*, *and therefore*, and *nevertheless*, .... But Gricean principles like “Be orderly” and “Be relevant” can help to defend the semantic non-ambiguity of *and*.

- Consider the two hypotheses:
  - The semantic ambiguity hypothesis: there are multiple *and’s*, and the one in (4a) and (4b) means “and then”;
  - Just one meaning for *and*: ordinary logical conjunction, plus a conversational implicature that the events happened in the order in which the two clauses are given, an implicature that can be derived from the Gricean principle “Be orderly”.

- First argument for a single *and*: Occam’s razor (“Do not multiply entities unnecessarily.”) If we posit multiple “and”’s, how many? Will we have “and then” in (4a-b), “and therefore” and “and nevertheless” for the sentences in (5), and other kinds of *and* in other sentences?

- Second argument: We can see in example (4c) that the principle, “Be orderly”, gives rise to the same implicature even without the word *and*.

- And a third argument is illustrated with example (4d). Conversational implicatures can be “cancelled” without contradiction: we can see that happening in (4d), which would be contradictory if *and* in the first clause of (4d) meant “and then”.

Thus it seems most reasonable to conclude that the sentential conjunction *and* is unambiguous: lexical semantics should specify that its truth-conditional meaning is just the meaning of the logical conjunction *and*. The rest can be explained within pragmatics, using the concept of conversational implicatures, generated by Grice’s “Conversational maxims”.

1.3. Conversational maxims. (“Gricean maxims”.)

Conversational partners normally recognize a common purpose or common direction in their conversation, and at any point in a conversation, certain “conversational moves” are judged suitable or unsuitable for accomplishing their common objectives. A most general principle:
**CP: Cooperative Principle:** Make your conversational contribution such as is required, at the stage at which it occurs, by the accepted purpose or direction of the talk exchange in which you are engaged.

Under this very general principle, Grice distinguishes four categories of maxims.

**Maxims of Quantity.**
(i) Make your contribution as informative as is required (for the current purposes of the exchange). [What does “as informative as is required” mean? See (Potts 2006).]
(ii) Do not make your contribution more informative than is required.

**Maxims of Quality.**
**Supermaxim:** Try to make your contribution one that is true.
(i) Do not say what you believe to be false.
(ii) Do not say that for which you lack adequate evidence.

**Maxim of Relation.**
(i) Be relevant.

**Maxims of Manner.**
Be perspicuous:
(i) Avoid obscurity of expression.
(ii) Avoid ambiguity.
(iii) Be brief (avoid unnecessary prolixity).
(iv) Be orderly.

The question of why speakers can normally be expected to obey the supermaxim of trying to tell the truth is insightfully discussed in David Lewis’s classic book *Convention* (Lewis 1969). There are other maxims that are not “conversational” maxims but which may also be observed during conversational exchanges (aesthetic, social, moral), such as “Be polite”.


Grice’s maxims are a first step towards formalizing the reasoning by which a hearer may conclude that a speaker is communicating more than she is literally saying. We can use the maxims to make inferences from the speaker’s choice of saying one thing rather than another in a given context; we consider not only what the speaker did say, but what the speaker might have said but did not say, taking into account what we know or assume about the purposes of the conversation, the speaker’s knowledge, and other aspects of the context.

- **Example:** saying (6) when in fact Bill has two wives. This is another example of a violation of the maxim of quantity, and would normally be misleading, although it is not false.

(6) Bill has a wife

- Sometimes it is impossible to fulfill one maxim without violating another. For instance, one may be unable to fulfill the first maxim of Quantity (say enough) without violating Quality (only say what you have evidence for.) **Example:** in conversation (7), B’s answer is less informative than required. Assuming B is trying to be cooperative, we can explain the violation if we assume that B could not give a more informative answer without violating the maxim of Quality. So B implicates that she does not know more precisely where C lives.

(7) A. Where does C live?  
B. Somewhere in the south of France.
• **Example:** If a speaker very obviously violates a maxim, the hearer is expected to recognize what is happening, and the maxim may be thus *exploited* to intentionally generate a conversational implicature, as in the following example.

(8) A asks: Where’s Bill?
   B answers: There’s a yellow VW outside Sally’s house. (Levinson 1983, p. 102)

• **Classic example:** Letter of recommendation: Via the Maxim of Relevance one can generate the implicature that the letter writer does not have a very high opinion of Mr. X.

(9) “Dear Sir, Mr. X’s command of English is excellent, and his attendance at tutorials has been regular. Yours, etc.”

### 1.5. Are Gricean implicatures universal?

Short answer: “Yes, but …”.

It makes a difference what alternatives the language makes available. In languages with basic lexical items for “older brother” and “younger brother” and a ‘non-basic’ term meaning “brother”, saying that Michio is Takashi’s “brother” will give rise to an implicature that the speaker does not know whether Michio is Takashi’s older or younger brother. So such implicature for English, since we don’t have ‘basic-level’ terms indicating older brother vs. younger brother.

Keenan (1974) argued that speakers of Malagasy do not obey the Quantity maxim; new information is a rare commodity and is only reluctantly shared, and in addition, individuals rarely make explicit statements about beliefs and activities. But as discussed by von Fintel and Matthewson (2008) and by Horn (2004), others have argued that in Keenan’s examples, the dialogue participants are indeed being cooperative relative to their culture, which involves taking other goals into account as well. Their conclusion agrees with Green (1990) that Grice’s maxims are universal, but using them to determine a speaker’s communicative intentions requires considering the fuller cultural context.

### 2. How a better understanding of conversational implicatures helps semantics.

We saw above in the discussion of *some* that failure to recognize such pragmatic principles as the maxim of quantity led many people to the unfruitful suggestion that “not all” is part of the *meaning* of “some”. It is by now clear to everyone that a much better explanation of the full range of facts results when the meaning of *some* is just “at least one”, and the usual implicatures of “not all” is explained by pragmatics.

A similar story can be told about “or”; it often seems that natural language *or* is ambiguous between an inclusive and an exclusive sense (p or q but not both). For defense of “inclusive only”, see my 2011 pragmatics handout (Partee 2011); I’ve omitted parts of it to make room for some history. (But in the case of “or”, there are still ongoing debates.)

### 3. At the borderline of semantics and pragmatics: presuppositions.

(Chierchia and McConnell-Ginet 1990, Ch. 6, Kadmon 2001, Levinson 1983, Chs. 3,4, Potts 2005) (Some of the recent history of theories of presuppositions can be found in Atlas (2006).)

A *presupposition* is (a) backgrounded and (b) taken for granted, i.e. assumed by the speaker to be already assumed by the hearer to be true.

A classic definition of *semantic presupposition*: A sentence S presupposes a proposition p if p must be true in order for S to have a truth-value (to be true or false). *Note that this requires that*
we allow some sentences to lack a truth-value; this definition does not make sense if we work with a strictly bivalent logic, in which each sentence must be either true or false.

An approximate definition of **pragmatic presupposition**: A use of sentence S in context C pragmatically presupposes p if p is backgrounded and taken for granted by the speaker in C.

Test for backgrounding: p is in the background of S if p is implied by all of the sentences in the “S family”:

(10) a. S  
    b. It is not the case that S.  
    c. Is it the case that S?  
    d. If S, then S’.  

(11) “Joan has stopped drinking wine for breakfast.”

• Presupposition: Joan used to drink wine for breakfast.

Backgrounded but not presupposed: non-restrictive relative clauses.

(12) Jill, who lost something on the flight from Ithaca to New York, likes to travel by train.

• A number of authors have considered the embedded proposition, that Jill lost something on the flight from Ithaca to New York, to be a presupposition (Keenan 1971, Levinson 1983), but arguments against considering it a presupposition can be found in Padučeva ([1985] 2009, p.65) and later in (Chierchia and McConnell-Ginet 1990, Kadmon 2001, Potts 2005). For Potts (2005), non-restrictive relative clauses generate conventional implicatures (see Sec. 4).

• Contrasting sentence with a real presupposition: Pseudo-cleft construction.

(13) What Jill lost on the flight from Ithaca to New York was her new flute.

3.1 **Presuppositions of definite descriptions.**

(14) “After the separation of Schleswig-Holstein from Denmark, Prussia and Austria quarrelled.”

This is an example from Frege (1892). Frege states that the thought that Schleswig-Holstein was once separated from Denmark “is the necessary presupposition in order for the expression in (14) to have any reference at all”. A classic example discussed by Russell and Strawson is (15).

(15) a. The present king of France is bald.  
    b. The present king of France is not bald.

Russell analyzed (15b) as ambiguous, treating the conditions of existence and uniqueness as part of the truth-conditions of the sentence. If there is no king of France, (15b) would come out true on Russell’s analysis if negation has wide scope, false if the definite description has wide scope.

(Optional exercise: You could work out a Russellian analysis of this kind explicitly by using our fragment, with Montague’s <<e,ι>,f> type analysis of “the king”.)

Strawson argued that it is more normal to consider (15b) neither true nor false if there is no king of France. Strawson’s analysis corresponds to our e-type treatment of definite descriptions. If you try to evaluate (15b) using a Strawsonian analysis, assuming there is no king of France, then the subject NP will get no semantic value. And we assume that if one of the parts has no semantic value, then the whole sentence has no semantic value. But as Strawson noted, a sentence like (16) does not lack a truth value: it seems to be definitely true.

(16) Sarkozy is not the king of France.
For this example (but not for all), we can capture the absence of presupposition by using the predicative $e,t$ meaning of the definite description proposed in (Partee 1986). In other examples, as argued by Hajicová (1984), Theme-Rheme structure may be crucial: a definite description that is part of the Theme (Topic) carries a presupposition of existence and uniqueness; but a definite description that constitutes all or part of the Rheme (Focus) seems to carry only an “allegation”, or cancellable implicature, of existence and uniqueness.

(17)  a. Our defeat was not caused by Bill’s cousin.
    b. Bill’s cousin did not cause our defeat.

Potential presuppositions: (i) we were defeated. (“our defeat” has a reference.) (ii) Bill has a cousin. Test for cancellability:

(18)  a. “... in fact Bill does not have a cousin.” (ok after 17a, not after 17b)
    b. “..., in fact this time we achieved a great victory.” (ok after 17b, not after 17a)

A good discussion of referential status of a variety of kinds of noun phrases, and their associated presuppositions, can be found in Chapter 4 of (Padučeva [1985] 2009).

**Are definiteness presuppositions universal?** It seems that some languages have articles that presuppose ‘familiarity’, as in Heim’s theory of *the*, and some have articles that presuppose ‘uniqueness’ as in Strawson’s approach (modifiable to ‘maximality’ as in Link’s theory of plurality, discussed last week); some even have both: see (Schwarz 2008, 2009) on German.

Von Fintel and Matthewson (2008) report that the Salish languages have no determiners that presuppose either familiarity or uniqueness; Matthewson proposes a semantic parameter distinguishing languages that do or do not have presuppositional determiners.

### 3.2. Presuppositions of Factive Verbs.

Another classic case of presuppositions much studied by linguists are the presuppositions of factive verbs. Let’s consider two sets of verbs and compare their behavior in the sentences in the “S family”.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Non-factive verbs</th>
<th>Factive verbs</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>believe</td>
<td>know</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>say</td>
<td>regret</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>hope</td>
<td>be surprised</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>deny</td>
<td>notice</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>claim</td>
<td>discover</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(19)  a. John said that Bill is a spy.
     b. John didn’t say that Bill is a spy.
     c. Did John say that Bill is a spy?
     d. If John said that Bill is a spy, Mary will be unhappy.

None of the sentences in (19) imply that the speaker takes for granted, or even believes, that Bill is a spy, not even the positive assertion (19a). In contrast, all of the sentences in (20) require for appropriate use that the speaker takes for granted that Bill is a spy.

(20)  a. John knows that Bill is a spy.
     b. John doesn’t know that Bill is a spy.
     c. Does John know that Bill is a spy?
     d. If John knows that Bill is a spy, Mary will be unhappy.
We get similar results putting any non-factive verb in the pattern in (19) and any factive verb in the pattern in (20). The classic work is (Kiparsky and Kiparsky 1970); there has been much important work since then, including (Gazdar 1979, Heim 1992, Karttunen 1971, Karttunen 1973, Karttunen and Peters 1979).

3.3. Presuppositions in lexical meanings.

The division of “components” of lexical meaning into assertive and presuppositional has been emphasized both in the work of Fillmore (1971) and in the work of Apresjan (1974) and his colleagues. Good examples include the contrast discussed by Fillmore among the verbs blame, criticize, accuse, all involving an agent X, an addressee or patient Y, and an action P, and the different status of the components ‘X says/believes that Y did P’, ‘X says/judges that P is/was a bad action’, and ‘X says/believes that P happened’, and the similar contrast discussed by Padučeva ([1985] 2009, p.67) among the Russian verbs obvinjat ‘accuse’ (X obvinjaet Y v P) and osuždat ‘criticize’ (X osuždaet Y za P), noting an observation of Langendoen that when an adverb such as spravedlivо ‘justly’ is added to a sentence containing one of these verbs, what is asserted to be “just” is only the asserted part, not the presupposed part.

If we follow Frege and take the denotations of most words to be functions, then semantic presuppositions can be treated formally as conditions on the well-definedness of functions. Recall, for instance, our definition of the iota-operator used for the referential sense of the definite article: \( \iota \text{king}(x) \) is defined iff there is one and only one king, and undefined otherwise. In general, when a semantic presupposition (precondition) of a function is not satisfied, the function is not defined and it is impossible to compute a value (Heim 1983).

See von Fintel and Matthewson (2008) for discussion of similar lexical items in Salish which seem not to carry the expected presuppositions, judging by speaker’s reactions. [Some details in Partee (2011)] Von Fintel and Matthewson “tentatively conclude that all languages do have presuppositions, but how those presuppositions behave may differ from language to language.”

4. Implicatures within semantics: Conventional implicatures.

4.1. Conventional vs. conversational implicatures.

Grice: distinguished conventional implicatures and conversational implicatures.

Conventional implicature: part of the meaning of a word or construction but not part of its truth-conditions. An implicature which arises from the particular choice of words or syntax, rather than from conversational maxims. See (Potts 2002, 2005, Potts 2007). Potts argues that these are fully semantic, not pragmatic, but on a separate dimension, independent of “at-issue” meaning.

From Potts (2007):

(21) a. CIs are part of the conventional (lexical) meaning of words.
    b. CIs are commitments, and thus give rise to entailments.
    c. These commitments are made by the speaker of the utterance “by virtue of the meaning of” the words he chooses.
    d. CIs are logically and compositionally independent of what is “said (in the favored sense)”, i.e., the at-issue entailments.

Some authors have equated conventional implicature with presupposition, but conventional implicatures can add new information; for arguments see Potts (2005, 2007).

Examples: (22a) manage, (22b) too, (22c) even, (22d) but, (22e) the appositive construction, (22f) non-restrictive relative clauses, (22g) expressive meaning.
(22) (a) John *managed* to close the door.  
   **Assertion**: John closed the door.  **Implicature**: The door was hard to close.

(b) Susan left the party at midnight, and Maria left the party *early too*.  
   **Assertion**: Susan left the party at midnight, and Maria left the party early.  
   **Implicature**: Midnight was early to leave the party.

(c) *Even* Al passed the test.  
   **Assertion**: Al passed the test.  **Implicature**: Al was the least likely person to pass the test. There were grounds for expecting that Al would not pass the test.

(d) Mary is a linguist, *but* she’s rich.  
   **Assertion**: Mary is a linguist, and she is rich.  
   **Implicature**: Linguists are not usually rich.

(e) David Partee, a former president of the Alaska Dog Mushers Assn., lives in Fairbanks.  
   **Assertion**: David Partee lives in Fairbanks.  **Implicature** (conventional): David Partee was the president of the ADMA.

(f) Just like (e), but with non-restrictive relative clause ‘who is a former president of the ADMA’.

(g) Bob brought his *damn* dog with him.  
   **Assertion**: Bob brought his dog with him.  **Implicature**: Speaker has a negative attitude toward the dog, or toward Bob’s bringing the dog with him.

**Conversational implicature**: an implication that follows from general principles of conversational exchanges (Grice). **Example**: some usually conversationally implicates not all, by the Maxim of Quantity. Other examples were given earlier.

### 4.2. Non-restrictive vs. restrictive modifiers

There is an interesting difference between

- restrictive modifiers, whose content definitely contributes to the main at-issue truth conditions, and

- non-restrictive relative clauses (as in (22f)), which usually contributes a complete proposition that is independent of the at-issue meaning but relevant to it.

Potts (2005) argued that non-restrictive modifiers contribute a conventional implicature; that’s an entailment, but independent of the main “at-issue” entailments. I won’t discuss this topic this year; For details, see (Potts 2007); a detailed extract is included in [http://people.umass.edu/partee/MGU_2009/materials/MGU094.pdf](http://people.umass.edu/partee/MGU_2009/materials/MGU094.pdf), and a brief summary is included in Partee (2011).

### 5. Semantic/pragmatic classifications of definite and indefinite DPs.

In parts of our discussion of Heim’s work we discussed the debates about the primary ingredients of definiteness, familiarity and uniqueness/exhaustivity. Another important issue concerning definites that we have not discussed explicitly is one that starts from the work of Donnellan (1966), who distinguished referential and attributive uses of definite DPs. Classic examples include the alleged ambiguity of (23).

(23) The murderer is insane.

On the *referential* use, or interpretation, the DP is of type e, and is used by the speaker to pick out a certain individual. If it happens that the speaker is wrong, and the individual referred to is not actually the murderer, the speaker may still utter a true proposition, namely that “that individual” is insane, with a false presupposition or implicature, namely that the referred-to individual is the murderer. (To make this into a possible semantic analysis, there would have to be a reading of the
definite article that makes it very similar to a demonstrative; cf. David Kaplan’s “Dthat” paper (Kaplan 1978) for related ideas, not applied to this particular case.)

On the **attributive** use, the DP is probably best analyzed as a generalized quantifier; in that case there is no presupposition, and the sentence is paraphrasable as ‘Whoever is the murderer is insane’. That would be an appropriate interpretation if, for instance, the evidence for insanity comes from looking at the crime scene, and we may not even have identified a suspect yet.

Partee (1972) analyzed the distinction between **specific** and **non-specific** indefinites as analogous to Donnellan’s distinction between referential and attributive definites. I believe it is still reasonable to analyze both non-specific indefinites and attributive definites as non-type-e phrases, either generalized quantifiers or in some cases as \(<e,t>\) type. But for indefinites, the consensus is that we need both **scope** distinctions, as illustrated Lecture 3, and a further distinction among the wide-scope indefinites, which may be either quantificational (non-specific, existential) or pseudo-referential (specific). For discussion of formal approaches to capturing these distinctions, see (Kratzer 1998, 2005, Landman 2004, Schwarzschild 2000, Winter 1997, Yanovich 2006).

6. DP or NP speech acts.

We won’t have time to discuss this topic in any detail, but it is worth mentioning that although the normal working hypothesis is that the basic unit of communication is the proposition (plus proposition-sized units like questions, exclamations, wishes, and imperatives), there have also been proposals to the effect that sometimes NPs or DPs constitute complete speech acts on their own. The contrary hypothesis is that all such NPs or DPs are elliptical propositions. See (Progovac et al. 2006). Some examples:

(24)  
   a. John!  (vocative)  
   b. Ryabinushka.  (naming, identifying objects in the environment.)  
   c. Your turn.  
   d. Thief! Thief!  
   e. Fire!  
   f. Two beers.  (Two beers, please.)  
   g. Nice picture!

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