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Origin of the term “pragmatics”



Charles S. Peirce



Charles W. Morris

Subfields in semiotics

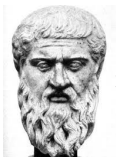
syntax: signs ↔ signs

semantics: signs ↔ world

pragmatics: signs ↔ users

Ideal language philosophy

Logical analysis of language



meanings as Platonic entities



meanings as thoughts



meanings as reference



structure and meaning of sentences



Logical semantics: truth-conditional semantics

Einen Satz verstehen heißt, wissen, was der Fall ist, wenn er wahr ist.

Semantics & Pragmatics

semantics: conventional meaning of expressions
compositional construction of meaning

pragmatics: meaning & use of utterances in context

Herbert Paul Grice

- March 13, 1913 – August 28, 1988
- Oxford & Berkeley
- natural language philosophy
 - non-natural meaning
 - implicature



The Gricean program

utterance meaning ← linguistic meaning + regularities of use

Cooperative Principle

Make your contribution such as it is required, at the stage at which it occurs, by the accepted purpose or direction of the talk exchange in which you are engaged.

→ Bart Geurts' talk on Friday

Maxims of Conversation

Maxim of Quality

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 Quantity

- (i) Make your contribution as informative as is required for the current purposes of the exchange.
- (ii) Do not make your contribution more informative than is required.

Maxim of Relation

- (i) Be relevant.

Maxim of Manner

Be perspicuous.

- (i) Avoid obscurity of expression.
- (ii) Avoid ambiguity.
- (iii) Be brief (avoid unnecessary prolixity).
- (iv) Be orderly.

The Gazdarian picture

pragmatics = meaning - truth conditions

Linear computation of meaning



Neo-Gricean Pragmatics

I-Principle

Say no more than you must (given Q).

John has a very efficient secretary.

↪ John has a very efficient *female* secretary.

Q-Principle

Say as much as you can (given I).

John invited some of his friends.

↪ John did not invite *all* of his friends.

M-Principle

Indicate a nonstereotypical situation by marked expressions.

The corners of Sue's lips turned slightly upward.

↪ Sue didn't smile in a stereotypical way.

Further developments

- **relevance theory**
(e.g. Sperber and Wilson, 1995, 2004)
- **radical pragmatics**
(e.g. Recanati, 1989, 2004; Borg, 2004)
- **bi-directional optimality theory**
(e.g. Blutner, 1998, 2000; Blutner and Zeevat, 2004)
- **game-theoretic pragmatics**
(Parikh, 1992; Benz et al., 2006; Franke, 2013)
- **grammatical approaches**
(Chierchia, 2004; Chierchia et al., 2012)

Levels of analysis

Constraints



Principles



Maxims



Reasons



Processes

Hurford's Constraint

In "A or B", A may not entail B. → Levy

Strongest Meaning Principle

If S is ambiguous, the strongest reading is preferred. → Poortman

Maxim of Quantity

Don't be over-informative.

Optimal language use

Be rational! → Lauer

Psycholinguistics

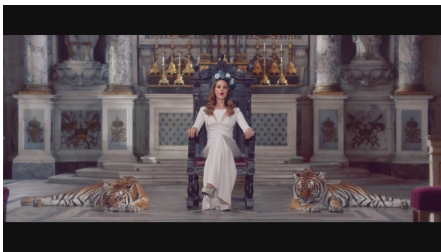
pragmatic inferences in a wider cognitive perspective → Degen

Sources of empirical data

introspection

experiments

corpora



Why do experiments in pragmatics?

- 1 lack of intuitive introspection
 - language acquisition → Katsos & Wilson
 - language change / evolution → Schaden
 - ...
- 2 fuzzy intuition / controversy between theorists or theories
 - complex data → Benz & Gotzner
 - McNabb & Penka
 - intonation & prosody → Gotzner & Spalek
 - Tomlinson & Rodriguez-Ronderos

Experimental Pragmatics in Europe

Euro-XPrag

<http://www.euro-xprag.org>

- June 2009 – June 2013
- ESF-funded travel grants for international cooperation
- conferences and workshops

XPrag.de

<http://www.xprag.de>

- April 2014 – April 2017
- “DFG Schwerpunktprogramm”
- more conferences and workshops to come

Experiments are not a solution

XPrag is young and comes with many open problems (exciting!)

Open issues

- which dependent measures to map onto established theoretical notions? → Benz & Gotzner
- how to unify research on different levels of analysis?
- ...

Computational Experimental Pragmatics

mathematical models (informed by linguistic theory) to predict quantitative data from corpus studies / psycholinguistic experiments

- must tie into general models of cognition
 - perception, classification, decision making, reasoning ...
- computational level & processing level
- highly interdisciplinary
 - computation, (behavioral) experiments, linguistic data

[e.g., see proceedings of CogSci 2014, contributions of Baumann, Bergen, Carstensen, Degen, Frank, Kao, Kon, Lewis, Tessler, Vogel, Qing among others:

<https://mindmodeling.org/cogsci2014/>]

Program

Monday

17:00 - 17:30 Introduction by the organizers

17:30 - 18:30 Roger Levy, *The Bayesian pragmatics of "and" and "or"* (invited speaker)

Tuesday

17:00 - 17:30 Nicole Gotzner & Katharina Spalek, *Exhaustive inferences and additive presuppositions: Interaction of focus operators and contrastive intonation*

17:30 - 18:00 Eva Poortman, *Between intersective and 'split' interpretations of predicate conjunction: The role of typicality*

18:00 - 18:30 Yaron McNabb & Doris Penka, *The processing cost of interpreting superlative modifiers and modals*

Wednesday

17:00 - 18:00 Judith Degen, *TBA* (invited speaker)

18:00 - 18:30 Napoleon Katsos & Elspeth Wilson, *Convergence and divergence in word learning and pragmatic inferencing*

Thursday

17:00 - 17:30 Sven Lauer, *Mandatory implicatures in Gricean pragmatics*

17:30 - 18:00 John Michael Tomlinson & Camilo Rodriguez-Ronderos, *The production of partial answers and ad-hoc inferences: evidence from spontaneous speech*

18:00 - 18:30 Anton Benz & Nicole Gotzner, *Embedded implicatures revisited: Issues with the Truth-Value Judgment Paradigm*

Friday

17:00 - 18:00 Bart Geurts, *Cooperativity* (invited speaker)

18:00 - 18:30 Concluding discussion led by the organizers

Alternate speakers

Gerhard Schaden, *Markedness, frequency and lexical change in unstable environments*

Matthijs Westera, *Exhaustivity is not a Quantity implicature - now what?*

Acknowledgements

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