Course handout

ISSUES IN PRAGMATICS (PLIN M301) 2005-6

LEXICAL PRAGMATICS

BA assessment: One long essay (4000 words) or 2 short (2000 each), due 4.00 May 1, 2006. Optional earlier deadline for first essay (on which you will get feedback): March 13, 2006.
MA assessment: If you are thinking of taking this course as an MA Option, I will be happy to discuss essay topics and/or look at drafts. One essay, 4,000-5,000 words, due 4.00 May 1, 2006.

Lectures and Reading: Copies of the lectures and much of the reading are available for overnight borrowing from UCL departmental file, by signing form in UCL Student Common Room. Written-up versions of the lectures will be available via the course website (http://www.phon.ucl.ac.uk/home/timw/PLINM301Overview.htm). There is also a Lexical Pragmatics website from which many recommended papers are downloadable (http://www.phon.ucl.ac.uk/home/lexprag/); others are available from my home page (http://www.phon.ucl.ac.uk/home/deirdre/), Robyn Carston's home page (http://www.phon.ucl.ac.uk/home/robyn/home.htm) and Dan Sperber's home page (http://www.dan.sperber.com)

Backup classes: These are given by Tim Wharton. Please feel free to discuss essay topics with Tim or me (make an appointment by e-mail (deirdre@ling.ucl.ac.uk).

Topics
You are free to write on any topic covered by the course. Some general topics and reading are given below. I would like not just a general survey of the issues but a critical discussion of one or two specific examples or points raised by your reading (e.g. not a general essay on lexical decomposition or innateness, but arguments for and against decomposition/innateness of one or two specific concepts). I am looking for evidence of independent thinking and reading, and an ability to set out essays professionally (with adequate bibliography, etc.; see dept. website).

General reading on lexical pragmatics and concepts(* marks particularly useful reading)

Blutner, R. 1998. Lexical pragmatics. *Journal of Semantics* 15: 115–62.
Blutner, R. 2004. Pragmatics and the lexicon. *Handbook of Pragmatics*: 488-514. Blackwell.
*Carston, R. 1997. Enrichment and loosening: complementary processes in deriving the proposition expressed? *Linguistische Berichte* 8:103-127.
*Carston, R. 2002. *Thoughts and Utterances*, chapter 5. Oxford, Blackwell.
Fauconnier, G. & Turner, M. 2002. *The Way We Think. Conceptual Blending and the Mind's Hidden Complexities*. New York, Basic Books.
*Fodor, J. 1994 Concepts: A pot-boiler. *Cognition* 50: 95-113.
Lakoff, G. 1987. *Women, Fire and Dangerous Things*, Chicago, University of Chicago Press.
Lascarides, A. & Copestake, A. 1998. Pragmatics and word meaning. *Jnl of Linguistics* 34
*Laurence, S. & Margolis, E. 1998 Concepts and cognitive science. (Chapter 1 of *Concepts: Core Readings*: an excellent survey of the issues discussed in the lectures.)
*Margolis, E. & Laurence, S. (eds) 1998 *Concepts: Core readings*. MIT Press. (an excellent collection, containing much of the reading for the course)
*Margolis, E. 1998 How to acquire a concept. *Mind & language* 13: 347-69. (Shows how even Fodor's atomistic concepts might be learned. Reprinted in Margolis & Laurence 1998)
Rosch, E. 1977 Classification of real-world objects: origins and representation in cognition. In P. Johnson-Laird & P. Wason (eds) *Thinking*. CUP: 212-222. (Classic arguments for prototypes)

Sperber, D. & D. Wilson 1986/95 *Relevance*, chap 2, section 4: 83-93. (on concepts)
*Sperber, D. & Wilson, D. 1998. The mapping between the mental and the public lexicon. In P. Carruthers & J. Boucher (eds) *Language and Thought*, pp. 184–200. CUP.
*Wilson, D. 2003. Relevance and lexical pragmatics. *Rivista di Linguistica/Italian Journal of Linguistics* 15.2: 273-291. www.phon.ucl.ac.uk/home/deirdre/home.html
*Wilson, D. & Sperber, D. 2002. Truthfulness and relevance. *Mind* 111 583-632.

Suggested topics

1. General topic (suitable for a single essay): Choose ONE word (e.g. *red, bachelor*), and say what conclusions you have drawn about its semantics and pragmatics as a result of the course.

2. "The concept *expressed* by use of a word on a given occasion may differ substantially from the concept *encoded*." (Sperber & Wilson) Explain and discuss.

Sperber, D. & D. Wilson 1983 Draft of *Relevance*, chap VIII, section 4; section 5, pp 64-71.
Carston, R. 1997. Enrichment and loosening: complementary processes in deriving the proposition expressed? *Linguistische Berichte* 8:103-127.
Carston, R. 2002. *Thoughts and Utterances*, chap 5. Blackwell: Oxford.
Sperber, D. & D. Wilson 1998 The mapping between the mental and the public lexicon. In P. Carruthers & J. Boucher (eds) *Thought and language*, CUP, Cambridge: chap 5.
Wilson, D. & D. Sperber 2002 Truthfulness and relevance. *Mind* 111 583-632.
Wilson, D. 2003. Relevance and lexical pragmatics. *Italian Journal of Linguistics/Rivista di Linguistica* 15.2: 273-291. Special issue on Pragmatics and the Lexicon.

3. Assess some of the arguments for/against lexical decomposition of TWO specific words.

Fodor, J., Fodor, J. & Garrett, M. 1975 The psychological unreality of semantic representations. *Linguistic Inquiry* Fall 1975, 515-31. (Arguments against decomposition.)
Fodor, J. 1981 The present status of the innateness controversy pp 283-92, in Fodor J. *Representations*. (Arguments against decomposition and for atomistic account.)
Fodor, J., Garrett, M., Walker, E. & Parkes, C. 1980 Against definitions. Cognition 8.3: 263-367. (Shorter version reprinted in Margolis & Laurence 1998).
Jackendoff, R. 1983 *Semantics & Cognition* chap 7 (Arguments against Fodor).
Jackendoff, R. 1989 What is a concept, that a person may grasp it? Mind & language 1989. (Reprinted in Margolis and Laurence; overlaps with Jackendoff 1990 *Semantic Structures*, chap 1, esp pp 37-44, which contains arguments against Fodor).
Fodor, J. 1998 *Concepts*, chap 3 The demise of definitions, Part I: The linguist's tale. (Recent summing up, with arguments against Jackendoff.)
Margolis, E. & S. Laurence 1998 *Concepts: Core readings* Chap 1, sections 2 'The classical theory of concepts', and 5 'The neoclassical theory'. (On Jackendoff)

4. Assess some of Fodor's arguments for the innateness of concepts (see also topic 9)

Fodor, J. 1981 The present status of the innateness controversy. Fodor *Representations* 257-316.
Samet & Flanagan 1989 Innate representations, in S. Silvers (ed.) *Rerepresentation*: 189-210.
Sterelny, K. 1989 Fodor's nativism. *Philosophical Studies* 55: 119-41.
Piatelli-Palmarini, M. 1989 Evolution, selection and cognition: from 'learning' to parameter setting in biology and the study of language. *Cognition* 31, 1: 1-44.
Fodor, J. 1998 *Concepts*, chapters 6 and 7 'Innateness and ontology'
Margolis, E. 1998 How to acquire a concept. *Mind & Language* 13: 347-69
Laurence, S. & Margolis, E. 2002 Radical concept nativism. *Cognition* 86: 25-55.

5. Evaluate some of the arguments for and/or against a prototype view of word meanings.
Smith, E. & D. Medin 1981 *Categories & Concepts*, chap 3, 'The Classical View'.
Lakoff, G. 1987 Cognitive models and prototype theory, in U. Neisser (ed.) *Concepts and conceptual development*: 63-100. (Also in Margolis & Laurence 1998)
Rosch, E. 1978 Principles of categorization, in Rosch & Lloyd (eds) *Cognition and Categorization*. (Also in Margolis & Laurence 1998)
Fodor, J. 1981 The present status of the innateness controversy, pp 292-8. (arguments against)
Armstrong, S., L. Gleitman, L. & H. Gleitman, 1983 ,What some concepts might not be. *Cognition* 13: 263-308. (Also in Margolis & Laurence 1998) (arguments against)
Osherson, D. & Smith, E. 1981 On the adequacy of prototype theory as a theory of concepts. *Cognition* 9, 1: 35-58) (Also in Margolis & Laurence 1998) (arguments against)
Kamp, H. & Partee, B. 1995 Prototype theory and compositionality. *Cognition* 57: 129-91. (Defence of prototype theories by formal semanticists).
Fodor, J. 1998 *Concepts*, chapter 5 Prototypes and compositionality (For recent summing up of arguments against prototype theories.)
Margolis, E. & S. Laurence 1998 *Concepts: Core readings*, Chap 1, section 3, The prototype theory of concepts.

6. Evaluate some of the arguments for/against a prototype view of encyclopaedic entries.
Read the Smith & Medin, Lakoff, Rosch and Margolis & Laurence papers under essay 5, plus:
Barsalou, L. 1987 The instability of graded structure: implications for the nature of concepts, in U. Neisser (ed) *Concepts and Conceptual Development*: 101-40.
Rey, G. 1983 Concepts and stereotypes. *Cognition* 15: 237-62. Also in Margolis & Laurence.

7. Explain what is meant by the 'metaphysical' function of concepts. Could concepts have necessary and sufficient conditions without our knowing them?
Rey, G. 1983 Concepts and stereotypes. *Cognition* 15:237-62. Also in Margolis & Laurence.
Putnam, H. 1970 Is semantics possible? In Margolis & Laurence 1998, chap 7.
Putnam, H. 1975 The meaning of 'meaning', in K. Gunderson (ed.) *Language, Mind and Knowledge*.
Kripke, S. 1972 Naming and necessity, in D. Davidson & G. Harman (eds) *Semantics of Natural Language*.
NB This is the most difficult and philosophical reading, but Rey gives a good summary.

8. Compare TWO accounts of lexical narrowing, illustrating your analysis with examples.
See references for topic 2, plus:
Blutner, R. 1998 Lexical pragmatics. *Journal of Semantics* 15: 115-162.
Levinson, S. 2000. *Presumptive Meanings.* CUP: 37-8, 112-34.
Carston, R. 2002. *Thoughts and Utterances.* Chapter 5, pp. 320-328.
Wilson, D. 2003. Relevance and lexical pragmatics. *Italian Journal of Linguistics* 15.2

9. Compare TWO accounts of approximation, illustrating your analysis with examples.
see references for topic 2, plus:
Lasersohn, P. 1999 Pragmatic halos. *Language* 75: 22-551.
Lewis, D. 1983 *Philosophical Papers*, volume I: 220-250 Oxford University Press, Oxford.
Wilson, D. & D. Sperber 2002 Truthfulness and relevance. *Mind* 111, esp. sections 3, 5, 6.
Wilson, D. 2003. Relevance and lexical pragmatics. www.phon.ucl.ac.uk/home/deirdre/home.html
10. Compare TWO accounts of metaphor, illustrating your analysis with examples.

see references for topic 2, plus:
Glucksberg, S. 2001 *Understanding Figurative Language: From Metaphors to Idioms*, OUP.
Carston, R. 2002. *Thoughts and Utterances*, chap 5.
Recanati, F. 1995. The alleged priority of literal interpretation. *Cognitive Science* 19:207-32.
Wilson, D. 2003. Relevance and lexical pragmatics. (or S & W (forthcoming) 'Metaphor').

11. Discuss the 'deferential use of concepts' (or 'division of linguistic labour')
Putnam, H. 1975 The meaning of "meaning". Reprinted in Putnam, *Philosophical Papers*, 2.
Burge, T. 1979 Individualism and the mental. In P. French, T. Uehling & H. Wettstein (eds) *Midwest Studies in Philosophy*, vol IV.
Sperber, D. & D. Wilson 1983 Draft of *Relevance*, chap VIII, section 4; section 5, pp 64-71.
Sperber, D. 1997 Intuitive and reflective beliefs. *Mind and Language* 12: 67-83
Margolis, E. 1998 How to acquire a concept. *Mind & Language* 13. Also in Margolis & Laurence 1998. (some discussion of deferential concepts).

12. Explain and assess the view that there are different kinds (or formats) of concepts.
Keil, F. 1992 *Concepts, kinds and cognitive development*. MIT Press, chapter 3.
Bloom, P. 1996 Intention, history and artifact concepts. *Cognition* 60: 1-29.
Schwartz 1980 Natural kinds and nominal kinds. *Mind* 89, 182-195.
Atran, S. 1987 Ordinary constraints on the semantics of living kinds. *Mind & language* 2: 27-60. (Nativist arguments that different concepts have different formats)
Sperber, D. 1994 The modularity of thought and the epidemiology representations. In L. Hirschfeld & S. Gelman (eds) *Mapping the mind: Domain specificity in communication and culture*. (Reprinted in D. Sperber 1996 *Explaining culture: A naturalistic account*.)
Millikan, R. 1998 A common structure for concepts of individuals, stuffs and real kinds.In *Behavioral and brain sciences* 21. Also in Margolis & Laurence.
Fodor 1998 *Concepts*, chaps 6 & 7 Innateness and ontology, I & II. (against 'kinds of concepts')

13. What do you see as the most plausible account of concept acquisition and development? (see also topic 3)
Keil, F. 1994 The birth and nurturance of concepts by domains: The origins of concepts of living things. In L. Hirschfeld & S. Gelman (eds) *Mapping the Mind.* CUP.
Carey, S. 1991 Knowledge acquisition: Enrichment or conceptual change? In S. Carey & R. Gelman (eds) *The Epigenesis of Mind.* (Also in Margolis & Laurence: 458-87.)
Sperber, D. 1994 The modularity of thought and the epidemiology of representations. In L. Hirschfeld & S. Gelman (eds) *Mapping the Mind: Domain Specificity in Communication and Culture*. (Reprinted in D. Sperber 1996 *Explaining Culture: A Naturalistic Account*.)
Premack, D. & A. Premack 1994 Moral belief: Form versus content. In L. Hirschfeld & S. Gelman (eds) *Mapping the mind: Domain specificity in communication and culture*. CUP.
Leslie, A. 1994 ToMM, ToBY and Agency: Core architecture and domain specificity. In L. Hirschfeld & S. Gelman (eds) *Mapping the mind*. CUP. (on objects, living things and agents.)
Gelman, S. & H. Wellman 1991 Insides and essences: Early understandings of the non-obvious. *Cognition* 38. (Also in Margolis & Laurence: 613-37.)

14. Discuss the role of pragmatics and 'theory of mind' in lexical acquisition
Wharton, T. 2004. Relevance and lexical pragmatics. *UCL Working Papers in Linguistics* 16: 323-342. (Plus further references, e.g. Paul Bloom, cited there.)