Perspectives in Pragmatics, Philosophy & Psychology 2

Alessandro Capone
Franco Lo Piparo
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Perspectives on Linguistic Pragmatics

Springer

Perspectives in Pragmatics, Philosophy & Psychology

Volume 2

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ISSN 2214-3807 ISSN 2214-3815 (electronic)
ISBN 978-3-319-01013-7 ISBN 978-3-319-01014-4 (eBook)
DOI 10.1007/978-3-319-01014-4
Springer Cham Heidelberg New York Dordrecht London

Library of Congress Control Number: 2013953194

Printed on acid-free paper

Springer is part of Springer Science+Business Media (www.springer.com)

Acknowledgments

I would like to give thanks to a number of people who made this project possible. Of course, the authors of this volume need special thanks and praise for writing the papers within strict limitations of time and, also, of subject-matter. My friends Igor Douven, Wayne Davis, Istvan Kecskes, Jacob L. Mey, Yan Huang, Katarzyna Jaszczolt, Michel Seymour, Neil Feit, and Keith Allan have tangibly helped the cause of this book, directly or indirectly, by providing feedback. Words do not suffice to express my gratitude. Ties Nijssen (Springer) has stimulated this project by providing us editorial guidance and also by persuading the publisher to accept the manuscript. I would like to thank him warmly. I would like to give thanks to Franco Lo Piparo, Marco Carapezza, Francesca Piazza, Pietro Perconti, Marco Mazzone, and Francesco La Mantia, whose reassuring attitudes have played an important role in launching this project. I would like to thank Eleni Gregoromichelaki for her continuous support, help, and encouragement.

Professor De Mauro stimulated my research activity on pragmatics and philosophy. I owe my various papers on this topic to his benevolent and stimulating attitude to me. I am eternally grateful.

But chiefly I would like to dedicate this volume to my father and my mother, Giuseppe Capone and Venerina Scilipoti, who have never stopped providing me with books and paper.

Alessandro Capone

Contents

Introduction

We are pleased to introduce the second volume of the series Pragmatics, Philosophy and Psychology, which explicitly deals with linguistic pragmatics. Unlike the first volume of the series, it mainly collects papers by professional linguists, who have been influenced by philosophy (in particular by pragmatic ideas) but work within linguistic departments and thus have integrated philosophical ideas based on pragmatics within well-consolidated paradigms of linguistic research. In this book we have some (critical) theoretical considerations on meaning (see Burton-Roberts' contribution) and its relation to implicatures and explicatures. Within linguistics, Grice's ideas were absorbed and critically developed by Sperber and Wilson, whose 1986 book has spurred much research in GB and across the world. I do not present this paradigm here because it is a popular theory but because it has the potential for explaining away many problematic features of language use—to mention one case where relevance-based ideas were very fruitful, consider the attributive/referential distinction by Donnellan, on which a number of authors have written extensively from the point of view of Relevance Theory. Relevance Theory is clearly interested in the speaker's point of view and in the Hearer's point of view (despite influential recent criticism). In fact, both the speaker and the Hearer cooperate in constructing meaning on the assumption that both the hearer's interpretation work and the speaker's codification/construction work are constrained by the Principle of Relevance, mainly the idea that Relevance is a function of cognitive rewards and an inverse function of cognitive efforts. An interpretation that guarantees rich cognitive effects and is accompanied by few cognitive efforts is certainly to be preferred. The chapter on Relevance Theory by Nicholas Allott magisterially introduces this important framework and allows readers to familiarize with technical details and linguistic terminology. The chapter by Alison Hall, in addition to introducing the readers to Relevance Theory, also fulfills the function of presenting one aspect of the theory, namely the reflections on the semantics/pragmatics debate and the concept of (conversational) explicatures. One of the main ideas of (at least some) pragmalinguists today is that semantics is mainly underdetermined and that pragmatics serves to bridge the gap between underdetermined logical forms and full propositional content. Now, of course, there is a debate on how wide the gap is or should be and not all pragmaticians propend for the view that semantic logical forms are necessarily underdetermined (see the

important work by Predelli 2005). However, if there are cases of pragmatic intrusion (and I myself, as well as many others have amply shown that there are important cases where semantics underdetermines content and pragmatics needs to intervene to provide full propositional forms), we need the notion of explicature and we need to accept that occasionally or rather quite often pragmatics intervenes to construct full propositional forms. Now what form should a pragmatic theory of pragmatic intrusion take? Here as well there are numerous options—one of these is the one advocated by Hall: pragmatic free enrichment plays a key role in pragmatic intrusion. And I myself agree with this idea, provided that we also accept that at least in some cases contextual considerations saturate elements of meanings which are by their nature open slots which need to be filled (take the case of pronominals or demonstratives).

How can we characterize explicatures? Are they cancellable or uncancellable components of meaning? In my own paper, I argue that explicatures are NOT cancellable. Of course, it could well be argued that that there are two types of explicatures and that only one of them is cancellable. However, in this paper I favor the view that the most clear cases of explicatures are those where the inference cannot be cancelled.

The considerations by Relevance Theorists can and have to be integrated into a chapter to be called 'Theory of Mind'; of course, on this issue, the community of scholars is divided, as some assert while others deny that the human mind has a module devoted to 'theory of mind'. While I myself have found this idea plausible, I agree that the topic needs to be explored further. Anyway, Louise Cumming's judicious considerations offered in this book will allow us to understand more about his intriguing and hot topic.

Pragmatics is mainly a theory of (linguistic) use; thus it should not surprise us that some authors approach it as such (see Gregoromichelaki and Kempson), for example. The considerations by Yan Huang and Corazza on point of view are also important because they show that the linguistic resources of human languages encode point of view and such encodings are of importance to a theory of language use and interpretation. In the remaining chapters the authors deal with reference (Keith Allan), common ground (Allan), Presupposition (Kecskes and Zhang, Mandy Simons, Geurts and Maier), definiteness (von Heusinger), pragmatic inference (Mazzone), pragmemes, language games (Carapezza and Biancini), as well as with other issues relating to language use. Of particular relevance to linguistic theorizing is the idea by Mandy Simons that, at least in some cases, presuppositions are of a pragmatic nature—not only in the sense that the presupposing expression requires some contextual assumptions to be satisfied (imposes constraints on context), but also in the sense that conversational implicature is responsible for the triggering of the presupposition. While we are still expecting more systematic work on this idea, I think that the importance of this idea has not been noted enough in the literature and I hope that this volume will at least serve to propagate it. The last paper in the collection by Carapezza and Biancini discusses the relationship between language games and Jacob Mey's notion of 'pragmeme.' The paper contains important considerations on language

use including a discussion of a recent word introduced into language use by the compulsive efforts of the media: 'Bunga Bunga.' While the paper is actually a discussion of some of Wittgenstein's ideas voiced in 'Philosophical Investigations,' it can anchor readers to modern theories such as the view that pragmemes are an essential part of language use—(some) linguistic expressions work on the basis of rich contextual assumptions without which they would be inefficacious.

Needless to say, pragmatics deals with the speaker's intentions, which need to be grasped by a hearer. The speaker must take the hearer into account when he codifies a message and must be able to predict which features of the context will be picked by the hearer in completing or enriching the message. The hearer must take into account the speaker's intentions as evinced by the linguistic materials of the utterance and by the arrangement of clues and cues available for inspection. Semantics and Pragmatics work in tandem (as Levinson 1983 said), however, there are places, which I myself called 'loci of pragmatic intrusion' where contextual information is needed to construct explicature. Very often indeed free enrichment is responsible for communicating the full propositional form of an utterance.

Alessandro Capone
Franco Lo Piparo
Marco Carapezza

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Linguistic Pragmatics

Noel Burton-Roberts

The paper questions the assumption (widespread in semantic—and indeed pragmatic—theory) that linguistic expressions have meaning in virtue of possessing semantic properties/content. Problems created by this assumption are discussed and an alternative account of meaning is developed. Although Burton-Roberts talks informally of words 'having meaning', the argument is that meaning is not a property—and has in fact nothing to do with the intrinsic properties of the things we say 'have meaning'. Rather, meaning is a relation. More specifically, it is a semiotic relation. In the case of linguistic expressions it is, yet more specifically, a symbolic—not indexical or iconic—relation (in the sense of Peirce). The overarching intention of the paper is set linguistic meaning in the context of meaning in general.

Louise Cummings

Theory of mind (ToM) describes the cognitive ability to attribute mental states both to one's own mind and to the minds of others. In recent years, ToM has been credited with playing a significant role in developmental and acquired pragmatic disorders. In this way, ToM deficits have been linked to pragmatic deficits in individuals with autism spectrum disorders (e.g. Martin and McDonald 2004), emotional and behavioural disorders (e.g. Buitelaar et al. 1999), intellectual disability (e.g. Cornish et al. 2005), right-hemisphere damage (e.g. Winner et al. 1998), schizophrenia (e.g. Brüne and Bodenstein 2005), traumatic brain injury (e.g. McDonald and Flanagan 2004) and neurodegenerative disorders such as Alzheimer's disease (e.g. Cuerva et al. 2001). In 'Clinical Pragmatics and Theory of Mind', Louise Cummings examines the central role of ToM reasoning in utterance interpretation. The chapter addresses what is known about ToM development during childhood and adolescence as well as changes in ToM skills as part of the aging process. The role of ToM in developmental and acquired pragmatic disorders is discussed. The contribution of ToM research into pragmatic

disorders is critically evaluated. Finally, several ToM theories are examined. The question is addressed of which, if any, of these theories is able to capture the pragmatic features of utterance interpretation.

Nicholas Allott

Relevance theory is a wide-ranging framework for the study of cognition, proposed (Sperber and Wilson 1986; 1987) primarily in order to provide an account of communication that is psychologically realistic and empirically plausible. This paper (i) presents relevance theory's central commitments in detail and explains the theoretical motivations behind them and (ii) shows some of the ways in which these core principles are brought to bear on empirical problems. The core of relevance theory can be divided into two sets of assumptions. Assumptions relating to cognition in general include the definition of relevance as a trade-off between effort and effects; the cognitive principle of relevance, i.e., the claim that cognition tends to maximise relevance and the view that human beings possess a 'deductive device' playing a central role in spontaneous inference. Core assumptions related specifically to communication include the Gricean claim that understanding an utterance is a matter of inferring what the speaker intended to convey from what she utters; the claim that there are exactly two speaker's intentions that are central to communication, namely the informative intention and the communicative intention and finally the communicative principle of relevance and the presumption of optimal relevance, which mandate the relevance-theoretic comprehension procedure, a heuristic that guides the search for the correct interpretation of utterances. Relevance theorists try to give explanations for communication in terms of the working of the relevance-theoretic comprehension procedure. There are, in addition, several strategies that guide the explanation of phenomena in relevance theory, including: (i) Grice's Modified Occam's Razor, in a stronger form; (ii) the possibility of dividing what is linguistically encoded between conceptual and procedural information; (iii) the interpretive/descriptive distinction and (iv) the use of ad hoc concepts.

Alison Hall

The distinction between pragmatics and semantics is widely agreed to be between, respectively, meaning that is recovered by inference, and meaning that is determined largely by linguistic mechanisms. However, the fact that there is often much interaction between linguistic and inferred meaning, particularly at the level of explicitly communicated content, has given rise to a variety of different positions on how and where to draw the distinction. Hall takes as her starting-point relevance theory's view (detailed in Carston 2002, 2008a) that semantics

corresponds to linguistically encoded meaning, and pragmatics to any context-dependent meaning, even that which is mandated linguistically and contributes to explicit content. The reason for drawing the distinction this way is that, due to extensive contribution from context-sensitive processes at the level of explicit content, there is no useful level of representation in utterance comprehension that both differs from encoded linguistic meaning, and can be considered 'semantic'. Hall examines a number of theories that do appear to make sense of the idea of semantic content: the hidden indexical theory defended by Stanley (2000) and others, and the semantic minimalism defended in quite different forms by Cappelen and Lepore (2005), Bach (2001), Borg (2004) and Korta and Perry (2008). Hall concludes that, while certain of these do isolate a notion of content that is genuinely semantic, by virtue of being extremely minimal, there is no case for revising the distinctions drawn by relevance theory.

Alessandro Capone (Explicatures are NOT Cancellable)

In this paper, Capone argues that explicatures are not cancellable on theoretical grounds. He takes that explicatures are loci of pragmatic intrusion, where pragmatics mimics semantics. He attempts to differentiate explicatures from conversational implicatures on logical grounds. He answers some objections to Capone (2009) by Seymour (2010) and he also responds to Carston (2010). The crucial problem addressed in this paper is whether by cancellability of explicatures we should intend the evaporation of an explicature from an act of saying when a different context is considered. He discusses the logical problems which this view gives rise to. In this paper, he explores the consequences of considering cancellability of an explicature a language game. He concludes that the cancellability test proposed by Carston can never be unified with the other side of cancellability (explicit cancellability cannot be unified with cancellability due to an aspect of the context that cancels the inference). Furthermore, he considers that cancellability à la Carston is neither a definitional, nor a constructive nor an eliminative language game. The paper makes use of important considerations by Burton-Roberts (Forthcoming) on intentionality and also discusses some of his examples.

Capone Alessandro (The Pragmatics of Indirect Reports and Slurring)

According to Volosinov (1971) there is a tension between two indirect discourse practices; one in which the reported message's integrity is preserved and the boundaries between the main message and the embedded reported message are formally marked and one in which such boundaries are dissolved as the reporting context allows the reporting speaker to intrude to a greater extent and transform

the message by stylistic interpolations. This tension is clearly resolved, in the context of my paper on indirect reports, through the recognition of pragmatic principles which assign default interpretations (according to which the boundaries between the reporting message and the reported message are clearly visible and the reported speaker's voice prevails at least within the embedded message), while allowing context to create priorities which override the default interpretations and make the otherwise costly violations of the pragmatic principles worthwhile thanks to the facilitation and subordination of the information flow to the exigencies of the embedding context.

Eleni Gregoromichelaki and Ruth Kempson

In the last 50 years, there has been general agreement in the domain of Theoretical Linguistics that theories of language *competence* must be grounded in the description of sentence-strings and their literal semantic content without any reflection of the dynamics of language *performance*. However, recent research in the formal modeling of dialogue has led to the conclusion that such bifurcations—language use versus language structure, competence versus performance, grammatical versus psycholinguistic/pragmatic modes of explanation—are all based on an arbitrary and ultimately mistaken dichotomy, one that obscures the unitary nature of the phenomena because it insists on a view of *grammar* that ignores essential features of natural language (NL) processing. The subsequent radical shift towards a conception of NL grammars as procedures for enabling interaction in context (Kempson et al 2010) now raises a host of psychological and philosophical issues: The ability of dialogue participants to take on or hand over utterances mid-sentence raises doubts as to the constitutive status of Gricean intention-recognition as a fundamental psychological mechanism (Gregoromichelaki et al 2011). Instead, the view that emerges, rather than relying on mind-reading and cognitive state meta-representational mechanisms, entails a reconsideration of "signalling" (or "ostensive communication") in a naturalistic direction and a non-individualistic view on meaning (see, e.g., Millikan 1993, 2005). Coordination/alignment/intersubjectivity among dialogue participants is now seen as relying on low level mechanisms (see, e.g., Pickering and Garrod 2004; Mills and Gregoromichelaki 2010) like the grammar (appropriately conceived).

Yan Huang

Logophoricity refers to the phenomenon whereby the 'perspective' or 'point of view' of an internal protagonist of a sentence or discourse, as opposed to that of the current, external speaker, is being reported by using some morphological and/or syntactic means. The term 'perspective' or 'point of view' is used here in a

technical sense and is intended to encompass words, thoughts, knowledge, emotion, perception and space-location (e.g. Huang 2000a: 173, 2001, 2002, 2006/2009, 2010a). The aim of this article is threefold. In the first place, Huang will provide a cross-linguistic, descriptive analysis of the phenomenology of logophoricity. Second, he will present a pragmatic account of logophoricity and the related use of regular expressions/pronouns in terms of conversational implicature, utilizing the revised neo-Gricean pragmatic theory of anaphora developed by Huang (1991, 1994/2007, 2000a, b, 2004, 2007, 2010a, c) (see also e.g. Levinson 2000). Finally, he will argue that (i) the neo-Gricean pragmatic analysis of logophoricity and the related use of regular expressions/pronouns in terms of pragmatic intrusion made here provides further evidence in support of the thesis that contrary to the classical Gricean position, pragmatics does 'intrude' or enter into the conventional, truth-conditional content of a sentence uttered, (ii) pragmatic intrusion into logophoricity is a conversational implicature rather than an explicature/impliciture and (iii) it involves 'pre'-semantic neo-Gricean pragmatics.

Eros Corazza

Corazza will argue that the notion of viewpoint plays central stage in our understanding and interpretation of many utterances. He will claim that such a notion is best characterized on the background of indexical reference; yet it cannot be reduced to it. He will thus show how points of view can be unarticulated (roughly, unmentioned) and yet play an important role in our linguistic practice inasmuch as the understanding of some utterances rests on the grasping of the point of view associated with them. Finally, he will mention how the notion of viewpoint (as an unarticulated linguistic phenomenon) plays an essential role in the understanding and interpretation of utterances containing anaphoric reflexive pronouns.

Keith Allan (Referring)

As defined here, a speaker's act of referring is the speaker's use of a language expression in the course of talking about its denotatum. This pragmatic definition of reference is defended against more traditional usage that contrasts "referring", "denoting", "describing", "alluding", "attributing", etc. It is proposed that the various differences in meaning supposedly captured by the different applications of these terms are better dealt with in other ways that can make shaper distinctions. What the hearer recognizes as the speaker's referent necessarily only 'counts as the referent' because it is on many occasions not identical to what the speaker identifies, indeed the speaker and hearer might even have entirely contradictory conceptions of the referent and yet the language expression used by the speaker can be said to successfully refer. For instance, if the Archbishop of Canterbury says to

Richard Dawkins *I will offer proof of the existence of God* and Dawkins replies *But God does not exist*, the deity that they are both referring to only counts as the same referent, because for the Archbishop God exists and for the author of *The God Delusion* God does not; in fact they have almost contradictory conceptions of the referent. This essay argues that an expression *e* frequently cannot identify exactly the same referent r for speaker and hearer, and that it is in fact unnecessary for it to do so; all that is required is that the referent counts as the same referent for the purpose of the communication. This is why mistaken reference like *Who's the teetotaller with the glass of water?* spoken of a man quaffing a glass of vodka can often successfully communicate who it is that is being spoken of.

Bart Geurts and Emar Maier (Layered Discourse Representation Theory)

Layered Discourse Representation Theory (LDRT) is a general framework for representing linguistic content. Different types of content (e.g. asserted, presupposed, or implicated information) are separated by putting them on different layers, all of which have a model-theoretic interpretation, although not all layers are interpreted uniformly. It is shown how LDRT solves so-called 'binding problems', which tend to arise whenever different kinds of content are separated too strictly. The power of the framework is further illustrated by showing how various kinds of contextual information may be accommodated.

Keith Allan (Common Ground)

Language is primarily a form of social interactive behaviour in which a speaker, writer or signer (henceforth S) addresses utterances (U) to an audience (H). It requires S to make certain assumptions about H's ability to understand U. This includes choice of topic, language, language variety, style of presentation and level of presentation. These assumptions constitute what can conveniently be called "common ground". They have been subsumed to context (e.g. Allan 1986; Duranti 1997); and at least a part of the common ground constitutes what Lewis 1969 referred to as "common knowledge", a term adopted by Stalnaker 1973. Schiffer 1972 called it "mutual knowledge*". Prince 1981 rejected "shared knowledge", preferring "assumed familiarity". Following Grice 1981, Stalnaker 2002 named it "common ground", which he described as "presumed background information shared by participants in a conversation … "what speakers [take] for granted—what they [presuppose] when they [use] certain sentences". A fatal flaw was carried over from Schiffer's definition of mutual knowledge* into Stalnaker's definition of common ground: "It is common ground that φ in a group if all

members accept (for the purpose of the conversation) that φ, and all *believe* that all accept that φ, and all *believe* that all *believe* that all accept that φ, etc.". The recursion within this definition would necessitate infinite processing on the part of each of S and H. This flaw has been accepted and repeated by many since. Clark 1996 attempted to circumvent it but his definition includes a clause that calls itself, thus creating an endless loop. In this essay, Allan suggests a way, inspired by Lee 2001, to characterize common ground from the points of view of both S and H which does not admit runaway recursion. In line with Stalnaker's mingling of presupposition and common ground, it refers to the preconditions on illocutions.

Mandy Simons

This paper, originally published in 2001, deals with the question of the source of presuppositions, focussing on the question of whether presuppositions are conventional properties of linguistic expressions, or arises as inferences derivable from ordinary content in combination with some general conversational principles. Simons argues that at least some presuppositions should be analysed as conversational inferences, on the grounds that they show two of the hallmarks of such inferences: contextual defeasibility and non detachability. She makes this case for the presuppositions associated with change of state predicates and with factives. She argues further for the need for a general principle for deriving presuppositions as inferences by illustrating a variety of cases of presupposition-like inferences not clearly involving a lexical presupposition trigger. In the second half of the paper, she moves towards the development of a general conversational account of the relevant presuppositions. Building on a brief comment in Stalnaker 1974, she develops the following pair of ideas: first, that an utterance embedding a proposition P may be seen as raising the question whether P; and second, that P may be related to a further proposition Q in such a way that it would make sense to raise the question whether P only if one already believed Q to be true. It is these required prior beliefs that constitute conversationally derived presuppositions. Although the account developed here is only a preliminary attempt, the relevance of contextually salient questions, or sets of alternatives, to an account of presupposition has been taken up in subsequent work, notably Abusch 2010 and Simons et al. 2010.

Klaus von Heusinger

The salience theory of definiteness has three historical sources: Lewis 1979 criticizes Russell's Theory of Descriptions and sketches an alternative theory using salience. Sgall et al. 1973 describe the information structure of a sentence with a hierarchy of "activated" referents. Grosz et al. 1995 argue on the basis of their analysis of discourse model in artificial intelligence that we need a salience

structure. Egli & von Heusinger 1995 and von Heusinger 1997 give a formal account of salience in terms of choice functions, and Peregrin and von Heusinger 1997 embed this into a dynamic semantics. Schlenker 2004 uses this semantics for definite noun phrases and conditionals.

Kecskes and Zhang

The goal of this paper is to redefine the relationship between common ground and presupposition within the confines of the socio-cognitive approach (SCA). SCA (Kecskes 2008; Kecskes and Zhang 2009; Kecskes 2010) adopted in this paper offers an alternative view on communication, which claims that communication is not an ideal transfer of information, and cooperation and egocentrism are both present in the process of communication to a varying extent. The SCA emphasizes the dynamics of common ground creation and updating in the actual process of interaction, in which interlocutors are considered as "complete" individuals with different possible cognitive status being less or more cooperative at different stages of the communicative process. Presupposition is a proposal of common ground, and there is a vibrant interaction between the two. They enjoy a cross relation in terms of content and manners in which they are formed, and their dynamism is inherently related and explanatory to each other. This claim has important implications to the solution to presupposition accommodation. After the introduction, Chap. 2 describes the socio-cognitive approach. Chapter 3 reviews the assumed common ground, and Chap. 4 introduces the speaker-assigned presupposition. Chapter 5 discusses the dynamism of presuppositions and common ground, and claims that their dynamic observations are coherent and explanatory to each other. Chapter 6 readdresses the accommodation problem with redefinition of the relations.

Alan Libert

This paper argues that there can be a pragmatics of artificial languages, even though most such languages have seen little or no use. Several areas of pragmatics are examined in relation to artificial languages: politeness (including pronouns, terms of address, honorifics and imperatives), formal language and other types of language, conversational implicature, non-descriptive meaning (including conjunctions, interjections and illocutionary force), and metaphor/non-literal language. Texts in several artificial languages (aUI, Sotos Ochando's Lengua Universal, Hom-idyomo, and Esata) are presented and briefly discussed. It is concluded that in most respects artificial languages are not very different in their pragmatics from natural languages, in spite of the fact that on the surface some artificial languages appear quite exotic; this is perhaps to be expected, but nevertheless is a interesting finding.

Sorin Stati

After presenting the contexts in which researchers speak about implicit elements—a list that highlights the conceptual diversity of meanings attributed to the term 'implicit'—Stati will focus on the actual topic of this article: the property 'implicit' as it functions in argumentative texts. Or, to put it another way, how do implicit propositions manifest themselves on the argumentative discourse level. Stati dwells on interesting inferential phenomena involving the argumentative roles of portions of text. He differentiates between a casual overhearer and the intended addressee, speculating on the differences in interpretative behavior. The inferential behavior triggered by argumentative relations within a text very often involves the recovery of implicit materials.

Marco Mazzone

In utterance understanding, both personal and sub-personal aspects appear to be involved. Relevance theory (starting from Sperber and Wilson 1986/1995) and Recanati (2004) have respectively explored two alternative ways to conceive of those aspects and their interaction. Here a third account is proposed, in the light of the automatic-controlled distinction in psychology, and of recent views concerning the cooperation between these two modes of processing. Compared to Recanati (2004), the account proposed here assigns a larger role to automatic, associative processes; at the same time, it rejects the view that consciousness applies only to what Recanati calls secondary pragmatic processes. Consciousness is rather held to cooperate with associative processes in any aspect of pragmatic processing, irrespective of the pragmatic distinction between explicatures and implicatures. On the other hand, a close consideration of how associative and conscious processes plausibly interact makes it appear unnecessary the hypothesis of a specialized process for utterance understanding—such as the automatic, inferential mechanism put forth by Relevance theory.

Dorota Zielinska

In this the author searches for the mechanism correlating linguistic form with content in order to explain (in the sense of the word 'explain' used in empirical and modern social sciences) how sentence meaning contributes to the utterance meaning. She does that against the background of two currently dominating positions on that issue: *minimalism* and *contextualism*. Minimalists regard language as a self-standing abstract system and claim that only weak pragmatic effects are involved in interpreting sentences. Contextualists believe that language

can be described adequately only within a theory of language understanding and that strong pragmatic effects are also involved in interpreting sentences. The resultant controversy, presented in Chap. 1, has been pronounced by Michel Seymour the most important one in the 20th century.

Zielinska proposes a specific model of the form-meaning correlation process, based on a novel mechanism of a linguistic categorization, which is compatible with a bio-social developmental perspective, advocated in Chap. 2. On this view, the utterance meaning is dependent both on the conventional meaning of the construction components conveying it, and on the specific social function of the whole construction (a relevant *pragmeme*). She finishes the paper by preliminarily testing the mechanism of the form-content correlation process both qualitatively and quantitatively. The latter tests meet the standards of empirical sciences.

Marco Carapezza and Pierluigi Biancini

The authors have tried to make the potentiality inherent in the concept of the linguistic game evident by taking it back to its original context in the work of Wittgenstein. This paper aims to re-examine some features of Wittgenstein's thought, considering in particular the notion of 'language-game'. The authors believe that the language-game might play a role in overcoming once and for all the classic distinction between semantics and pragmatics. We deal with the exegetical discussion of the notion 'language-game' as it was interpreted in two different senses: as a synonym of calculus or as a minimal unit of linguistic activity that is directed to obtaining certain pragmatic effects in a societal context. The latter, broader interpretation, is characterized by three different features: topicality, broader normativity and multimodality. Starting from an interpretation of language game as a pragmatic act, the authors work out a possible parallel between language games and the notion of pragmeme as presented by Mey. Both language game and pragmeme refer to an extended notion of the linguistic symbol seen as a non-linear, multimodal concept that overlaps the mere verbal unit of expression and is now considered as a set of diverse expressive resources (such as gesture, tone of voice and so on). This comparison will also work for a problem common to both language-game and pragmeme, that is the need to set a boundary to these units of analysis, thanks to which they could be identified. The authors advance a possible solution to this problem, which is rooted in a rethinking of Wittgenstein's notions. The proposal consists in focusing on the topic for which the language game is played. The topic is taken to be the organizing aspect of understanding of the game. The societal rules, the worldly knowledge, often taken to be the ground of understanding in our discourse are considered as merged together in a holistic unit called language game.

Meaning, Semantics and Semiotics

Noel Burton-Roberts

Abstract This paper questions the assumption, widespread in linguistic theory and pragmatics, that linguistic expressions have meaning in virtue of possessing semantic properties/content. Problems created by this assumption are discussed and an alternative, semiotic, account of meaning is developed that places 'linguistic meaning' in the context of meaning in general.

1 Introduction

In a discussion of relevance theory, Dan Wedgwood comments:

> Relevance theorists have tended to assume that RT can be used… as an adjunct to fairly conventional approaches to other parts of linguistic theory…. But in making the move away from the moderate contextualism of Gricean approaches, RT has more radical consequences, whether we like it or not. In effect, this constitutes a break from conventional perspectives on semantics… the nature of encoded meaning cannot be understood without active consideration of inferential contributions to meaning. This is nothing less than a reversal of conventional methodology, which tends to abstract away from inferential pragmatic processes as much as possible…. Once we reject [conventional semantic analysis], as RT does in principle, the nature of encoded meaning becomes an entirely open question…. A great deal of contemporary syntactic theorising is motivated by a wish to account for the perceived semantic character of a given sentence (hence the regular use of levels of representation of syntactic representation like LF, LOGICAL FORM) (2007, 679).

I am grateful to Phil Carr, Wolfram Hinzen, Magda Sztencel, Dan Wedgwood and Deirdre Wilson for discussion in connection with this paper. Needless to say, they are not responsible for errors or misthinkings in it, nor do they necessarily agree with everything in it.

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A. Capone et al. (eds.), *Perspectives on Linguistic Pragmatics*, Perspectives in Pragmatics, Philosophy & Psychology 2, DOI: 10.1007/978-3-319-01014-4_1,

These are the thoughts I develop in this paper. I will argue that pragmatic theory—and relevance theory in particular—should be seen as offering a challenge to 'conventional' linguistic wisdom.

What is at issue is the nature of meaning, no less. I will make a case for—or aim to reinstate—an account of meaning at odds with 'conventional' linguistic theorising, by which I will assume Wedgwood means Chomskyan generative grammar (CGG). The relevant CGG assumption is evinced by Brody (1995, 1) when he writes 'it is a truism that grammar relates sound and meaning'. CGG seeks to achieve this by positing two interface levels of linguistic representation, Phonetic Form (PF) and Logical Form (LF), attributing to expressions two sorts of property, phonological and semantic. This double-interface assumption is assumed to be necessary to the modelling of 'language as sound with a meaning' (Chomsky 1995, 2).

In reconstructing the idea that expressions 'have meaning' by assigning them semantic properties, CGG effectively equates semantics and linguistic meaning. I will argue that this insulates linguistic meaning from meaning in general and is unexplanatory. Furthermore, it is the basis of Grice's 'moderate contextualism'. As Wedgwood observes, relevance theory (RT) is radically contextualist in principle but shares Grice's and CGG's assumption that there is such a thing as linguistic semantics and Logical Form (LF) thought of as a level of linguistic encoding. To that extent RT's radical contextualism is qualified.

CGG's double-interface assumption is a legacy of Saussure's concept of sign (Burton-Roberts and Poole 2006). I approach the topic of this paper through a discussion of the Saussurean sign (in Sect. 2) because I want to bring semiotics to bear on the subject of meaning and to highlight some problems for CGG's (Saussurean) reconstruction of 'sound with a meaning'. I reject that CGG account in favour of a (roughly) 'Peircean' concept of sign. This, I argue, is more general in its application, more explanatory and more consistent with the cognitive naturalism of CGG and RT.

In the light of that, Sect. 3 offers a general account of what meaning is, developing ideas touched on in Burton-Roberts (2005, 2007). This account denies that linguistic expressions have semantic properties. It distinguishes between meaning and semantics. Assuming, with RT, that only thoughts have ('real') semantic content, it argues that meaning is a relation (of something, potentially anything) to the semantic content of a thought, a cognitive relation effected by inference. The crucial idea here is that meaning is not a (semantic) *property* but a semiotic *relation* (to semantic properties). This goes for meaning generally; my aim is to situate linguistic meaning within a semiotic account of meaning in general. My own view is that the picture of meaning that emerges is consistent with RT. One might even go as far as to say that relevance, as defined in RT, *is* meaning.[1]

[1] I won't push this thought further but the reader may want to bear it in mind in Sect. 3. Incidentally, Sperber and Wilson (1986/1995: Chap. 1) assume that any *semiotic* approach to meaning aims to reduce all meaning to a code model of communication. That may have been true of 20th century extensions of Saussurean semiotics (they cite Levi-Strauss and Barthes)—in

2 The Saussurean Sign

There are two well-known features of the Saussurean linguistic sign.

The first is that the linguistic sign is constituted by the conjunction of a concept and a sound image. Sound image and concept combine to make a further entity, the sign itself, which is a 'double entity' (Saussure, 65), 'a two-sided psychological entity' (66).[2] The relation between concept and sign and that between sound image and sign are part ∼ whole relations. In modern parlance, the concept is the sign's semantics; the sound image is its phonology. The relation between semantics and phonology is thus a part ∼ part relation. Saussure (e.g. 67) explicitly refers to the sign as 'the whole' and to the sound image and concept as its 'parts'. The same idea is evident in CGG's double-interface assumption: 'there are sensorimotor systems that access one aspect of an expression and there are conceptual-intentional systems that access another aspect of an expression, which means that an expression has to have two kinds of symbolic objects as its parts' (Chomsky 2000b, 9).

The formal study of part ∼ part and part ∼ whole relations is called 'mereology'. I won't be invoking formal mereology, but I'll borrow the term 'mereological' in discussing the Saussurean sign. In an intuitively equivalent formulation, concept and sound image are respectively the semantic and phonological *properties of* (or 'aspects' of) the linguistic sign.

Saussure has little to say about where syntax figures in this. This is addressed in CGG, where phonological and semantic features are treated as properties (parts, aspects) of *syntactic* entities (Burton-Roberts 2011). This adds substance to the 'double entity' idea: if you believe in the existence of a further entity jointly constituted by phonological and semantic features, there should indeed be something substantive to say about it—e.g. that it is syntactic—over and above what can be said about the phonological and the semantic.

The second feature of the Saussurean sign is that it involves a *semiotic* relation, the signifier ∼ signified relation. The sound image signifies the concept. Significantly, nothing in CGG reflects this feature of Saussure's thinking, a matter I address below.

(Footnote 1 continued)
connection with which they write (with justification in my view) 'The recent history of semiotics has been one of simultaneous institutional success and intellectual bankruptcy' (p. 7)—but nothing could be further removed from my aim here. Whereas, in their terms, 'The semiotic approach to communication… is a generalisation of the code model of verbal communication' (p. 6), my aim is precisely the opposite: to situate linguistic meaning within a more general semiotic—i.e. inferential—account of meaning. My claim is that all meaning (though not all communication, see note 9 below)—and all 'decoding' involved in the construction of meaning—is inferential in character.

[2] All references to 'Saussure' are to Wade Baskin's (1959) translation of the *Cours de Linguistique Generale*.

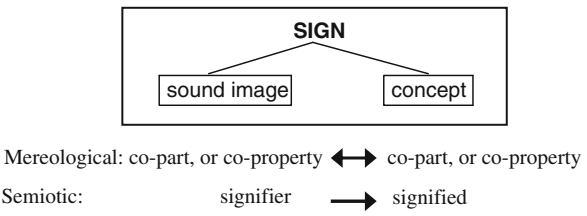

Fig. 1 The Saussurean sign

Now, the mereological (part ∼ part) relation and the semiotic (signifier ∼ signified) relation are at least different. Since things generally are related in more ways than one, it might seem that sound image and concept can be related in both these ways, as Saussure assumed (see Fig. 1).

Against this, I will argue that the two relations are so different as to be incompatible; we must choose between them.

Notice first that the part ∼ part relation is symmetric, in the sense that they are *co*-parts, *co*-constitutive of the Saussurean sign. Saussure (113) draws a general analogy with a sheet of paper: in a language ('a system of signs'), sound image and concept each relate to the sign as the two sides of a sheet of paper relate to the sheet. As we shall see, this symmetry was crucial for Saussure. In sharp contrast, the semiotic relation is antisymmetric. One term is the signifier, not the signified; the other is the signified, not the signifier. It's a relation *from* the sound image (signifier) *to* the concept (signified). The sheet-of-paper analogy is completely inappropriate in this connection.

Notice furthermore that on the mereological conception there is no *direct* relation between sound image and concept. Their (part ∼ part) relation to each other is entirely derivative: they are in that relation only because each is, primarily, in the (antisymmetric) part ∼ whole relation to the sign. In that respect, the relation between sound image and concept is not self-explanatory. The semiotic relation, by contrast, is direct and primary. It does not follow from any other more direct relation. In that sense, by comparison with the mereological relation, the semiotic relation between sound image and concept is self-explanatory.

A further difference is that the mereological account treats as an *object* ('the sign') what the semiotic idea, by itself, treats purely as a *relation*. The mereological idea, by definition, entails that there is an object distinct from both sound image and concept constituted by their combination. Not so the semiotic idea. Unless mereological, a relation between two objects implies no further object.[3] Notice that 'property-of' talk in connection with the mereological conception is questionable on the semiotic conception. If *x* stands in a semiotic relation to *y* (i.e.

[3] Other than an abstract set-theoretical entity. See Burton-Roberts (2011) for discussion of the issue in CGG. Saussure explicitly denies the sign is an abstract entity (15, 102), insisting on its being a 'concrete entity'. His reference to 'parts' and 'wholes' (e.g. 67) would be inappropriate were he thinking in merely set-theoretical terms. Sets don't have parts, they have members.

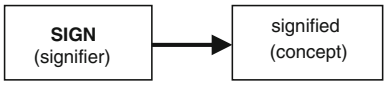

Fig. 2 The 'purely semiotic' (Peircean) sign

signifies *y*), there is no conceptual necessity to posit an object *Z* (the 'sign') for *x* and *y* to be properties of.

This doesn't mean that, on a purely semiotic conception, we have to abandon any idea of 'sign'. There is an alternative, non-mereological, conception of sign compatible with the signifier ∼ signified relation. On this conception it is the *signifier* itself that is the sign (Fig. 2).

I call it 'Peircean' because it is consistent with the thought of Peirce (1933). But I won't be invoking the whole panoply of Peircean semiotics. Furthermore, I will assume—with Saussure, not Peirce—that the signified is always a concept (Sect. 3).

Saussure (67) explicitly rejects this (Fig. 2) concept of sign, insisting on the mereologically constituted sign (Fig. 1). Against this I will suggest that the mereological account is conceptually (a) insufficient and (b) unnecessary, even (c) assuming it is possible. And there are other objections to it, notwithstanding its influence on CGG's double-interface assumption and moderate contextualism's 'encoded meaning/semantics'.

The mereological account is conceptually insufficient, I hold, because there is nothing actually *semiotic* about it, in and of itself. Mereological (part ∼ part and part ∼ whole) relations have nothing to do with meaning. What I mean is that they fail to differentiate the relation we are concerned with from e.g. that between the barrel and the nib of a pen, the two sleeves of a shirt, the seat and back of a chair, which *are* mereological. This mereological idea offers no explanation of why a sound image (phonology) and a concept (semantics) should actually be related. It might be objected that this ignores the fact that, for Saussure, the relation between sound image and concept isn't only mereological, it's also semiotic. But that just goes to show the conceptual insufficiency of the mereological idea in this context. It *needs* to be supplemented by the semiotic idea.

As regards conceptual necessity: having supplemented it with the semiotic relation, what conceptual/theoretical work remains for the mereological account? It adds nothing. The semiotic idea, we have just seen, is necessary—and it is in itself sufficient. Furthermore, it yields a concept of sign that is at least more obvious: what is a sign if not a signifier?[4] It is also more parsimonious. It calls for just one relation between just two entities. The mereological account multiplies beyond necessity. It posits three relations (two part ∼ whole relations and a part ∼ part relation) and three entities- and needs the semiotic relation.

[4] It is reasonable to ask what signs are signs *of/for*. On the Fig. 2 (purely semiotic) notion of sign, the question receives an answer (though a general one): they are signs of/for concepts. But on the Fig. 1 (Saussurean) notion of sign, the question is simply incoherent: the mereologically constituted sign isn't a sign *of/for* anything. See below on a necessary precondition for signification (and bootstrapping).

We might even question whether in this context the mereological idea is possible, on the grounds that phonological and semantic properties are *sortally* distinct. Sortally distinct properties are such that nothing can have both sorts of property. For example: sore throats, earthquakes, epidemics, years, prime numbers, marriages, mortgages—none of these is of a sort that can be sky blue, right-angled, bisyllabic or constitute a proof of Fermat's last theorem. Against this it might be argued that, since they are both mentally constituted, phonological and semantic properties cannot be sortally incompatible. However, given how phonology and semantics are grounded, their respective contents are sortally incompatible: articulatory/acoustic versus conceptual-intentional. Arguably, the sortal incompatibility of sound image and concept is the basis of Saussurean arbitrariness: whatever species of relation holds between sortally incompatible properties, it can only be arbitrary (non-natural). Within CGG this sortal incompatibility is effectively acknowledged in its assumption that phonological and semantic properties are mutually un-interpretable (Burton-Roberts 2011).

Given this sortal consideration, can we really allow that something could be mereologically constituted as both bisyllabic and prime, e.g. the putative 'double entity' *seven*? That question doesn't even arise on the Peircean conception. The Peircean sign is bisyllabic, not prime. Sortally distinct, and separate, from the sign itself is the numerical concept it signifies, which is prime not bisyllabic. I suggest the relation can only be semiotic, not mereological.

Furthermore, since the signified is mind-internal (a concept), the mereological account must insist the signifier is also mind-internal. Otherwise we would be committed to something (the Fig. 1 'sign') constituted mind-internally in one part and mind-externally in its other part. I take that to be incoherent. Of course, Saussure does insist on the mind-internal nature of the sound image—reasonably, assuming it's phonological. However, the purely semiotic account (Fig. 2), while compatible with a sign being mind-internal, is compatible with a sign being a mind-external phenomenon. There's no reason why a semiotic relation can't hold between a mind-external phenomenon and a (mind-internal) concept/thought. A wide range of mind-external phenomena do function as signs for us.[5] Potentially at least, all phenomena do. I take this to be the substance of RT's (very general) First Cognitive Principle of Relevance (Carston 2002, 379).

In that respect, the purely semiotic (Peircean) conception has wider application, applying not just to linguistic signs but to signs in general. Notwithstanding Saussure's suggestion (e.g. 16) that linguistics might form part of a more general 'semiology', his account actually applies only to linguistic signs. The symmetry of his mereological conception is crucial here.

Saussure insists on this symmetry on the grounds that sound image (qua signifier) and concept (qua signified) are related by mutual implication (e.g. 103).

[5] The nearest Saussure comes to allowing this is in the idea that (mentally constituted) signs are 'realized' in phonetic phenomena. But even here, it is surely just the signifier (the sound image) that's 'realized'. Since the Saussurean sign is constituted in part by a concept, it's hard to accept it could be 'realized' in phonetic phenomena.

Recall the sheet-of-paper analogy. However, while the *terms* 'signifier' and 'signified' are mutually implying, it doesn't follow that the things those terms refer to (sound image, concept) are mutually implying. What I mean is that a concept is still a concept whether or not it happens to be signified by a sound image. In fact, surely, a conceptually necessary precondition for signification is that the signified exist independently of the fact that it is signified. (There is again an asymmetry here, for nothing similar can be said of the phonological sound image, the whole rationale of which lies in its being a signifier.) But all this is precisely what Saussure seeks to deny. The symmetry of his mereological conception is motivated by his view that concepts only exist as constituents of (arbitrary) linguistic signs. He explicitly denies that 'ready made ideas exist before words' (65, see also 112). Assuming concepts necessarily figure in thought/ideas, the Saussurean contention is that thought is couched only in the signs—the 'code' (14)—of some particular language. The motivation, in short, is an extreme version of the so-called Sapir-Whorf hypothesis.

This must be rejected, I believe. As Sperber and Wilson (1986/1986, 192) and Carston (2002, 30–42) argue, what is thought/thinkable extends well beyond what is linguistically encoded/encodable. This is not a merely philosophical or theoretical matter; it's the stuff of common experience. Chomsky (2000b, 76) puts it well: '…very often, I seem to be thinking and finding it hard to articulate what I am thinking. It is a very common experience… to try to express something, to say it and to realize that is not what I meant… it is pretty hard to make sense of that experience without assuming that you think without language. You think and then you try to find a way to articulate what you think and sometimes you can't do it at all;… if you are thinking, then presumably there's some kind of conceptual structure there.' The universality of such experience, the necessary precondition for signification mentioned earlier and the related problem of how the Saussurean sign could actually evolve/arise other than by the merest (most circular) bootstrapping (Fodor 1975), all lead me to agree there must be 'some kind of conceptual structure there', a language of thought 'used internally' (Chomsky 2006, 9), if subconsciously, logically prior to a speaker's particular language, as argued by Fodor and assumed in RT.[6]

How is the set of concepts delimited? Since the relation between sound image and concept is arbitrary, if concepts only exist as constituents of (arbitrary) linguistic signs then the set of concepts must be arbitrary (and, notice, semantics = linguistic

[6] I would argue it is phylogenetically and ontogenetically prior. The passage from Chomsky, incidentally, is consistent with a more nuanced version of the Sapir-Whorf hypothesis. I am not the first to suggest there is more than one kind of thought. There is (a) the kind of thought explicitly referred in that quote and (b) another, also in evidence there, which consists in gaining more conscious *access* those thoughts by trying to articulate them. See Burton-Roberts (2011).

Grice takes the Saussurean line: 'A plausible position is that…language is indispensible for thought' (1989: 353). But (355) he is upfront—and unusually clear—on the dilemma this poses re the precondition for signification (his 'intelligibility'). Less clear (to me) is his proposed solution (355–356).

semantics). Another response, more consistent with the naturalism of CGG and RT, is that the set of concepts is the set of humanly entertainable concepts, a set delimited by nature—human nature. This is consistent with a Peircean conception of sign but not with what motivates the Saussurean sign.

2.1 CGG and Pragmatics

I've suggested we must choose between the Saussurean (mereological) sign and the Peircean (purely semiotic) sign and have sought to show we must choose the latter. All this would be of merely historical interest were it not that CGG makes the diametrically opposite choice. It is the mereological idea that is embodied in CGG's idea of a (syntactic) object with phonological and semantic properties ('aspects…parts'). And *only* the mereological idea. CGG doesn't appeal to 'sign'. It eschews all reference to semiotic concerns. In CGG we are asked to make do *just* with a mereological (part ∼ part) account of the relation between phonology and semantics.

I have argued this is at least conceptually insufficient—uninformative and unexplanatory. Mereological relations have nothing to do with meaning. CGG's response might be that, in attributing semantics to expressions, it assigns them their meanings. This equates 'having meaning' with 'having semantic properties' in the linguistic context. The next section presents an account of meaning that undermines that equation. In the meantime, I here offer some observations on the mereological account in the context of CGG and RT.

In addition to the above objections to it, the mereological account poses two problems internal to CGG (Burton-Roberts 2011). The first is this. As noted, phonological and semantic properties are acknowledged in CGG to be mutually un-interpretable. If lexical items (and expressions composed of them) are [phon + sem] 'double entities', their phonological properties are not interpretable at LF and their semantic properties are not interpretable at PF. As a consequence, neither of the interfaces that the linguistic computation serves is actually capable of interpreting the double entities—words and thus anything composed of words—it is generally thought to manipulate.

The second (related) problem is this. I assume, with CGG, that the linguistic computation is universal (invariant) and natural (innate). But how could such a computation possibly operate with objects mereologically constituted by phonological and semantic properties, given that the relation between those properties is arbitrary (non-natural)? Being arbitrary, such relations are cross-linguistically variable, not innate but learned in the course of acquiring a language. This indeed is what Chomsky assumes: 'there is something like an array of innate concepts and… these are to a large degree merely "labeled" in language acquisition' (2000a, 65). Notice that the label metaphor (see also pp. 61, 66) anyway seems less consistent with CGG's mereological picture than with the semiotic. It is superfluous, and surely wrong, to posit something constituted both by the label itself and

what-it-is-a-label-for. If the label metaphor is appropriate, why not allow it is (morpho-) phonologically constituted *signifier* for the concept?

To my knowledge Chomsky has only ever mentioned semiotics in a brief and scathing dismissal (2000b, 47–8). This dismissal may relate to a methodological objection to semiotics within 'conventional' linguistics. I suggested earlier that the semiotic account is recommended over the mereological on the grounds of its wider application, to meaning in general. Within autonomous linguistics (incl. 'semantics'), this—effectively, the diffuseness of semiotics—would count as a positive dis-recommendation. 'Semantic theory' is thought of as concerned exclusively with *linguistic* meaning. This restriction of the scope of 'semantics' might be thought an advantage if linguistics is autonomous, concerned with a module of mind, to be insulated from dealing with interpretation in general. In connection with the project of constructing an 'interpreter' that 'accepts non-linguistic as well as linguistic inputs', Chomsky writes 'the study of the interpreter… is not a topic for empirical enquiry…: there is no such topic as the study of everything' (2000a, 69). See also Fodor's First Law of the Non-Existence of Cognitive Science: 'the more global…a cognitive process is, the less anybody understands it' (1983, 107).

In the light of that, however, one might wonder whether, in assigning 'semantic' properties (and Logical Form) to expressions in a module of mind, CGG does in fact claim to deal with meaning/interpretation as generally understood. In fact, Chomsky is actually quite sceptical about such an enterprise (2000a, 21)—it is not the job of science to elucidate folk-scientific notions like 'meaning' (notwithstanding his 'language as sound with a meaning')—and indeed sceptical about 'semantics' in generative grammar. 'It is possible that natural language has only syntax and pragmatics; it has "semantics" only in the sense of "the study of how this instrument… is actually put to use"' (2000a, 132).

I believe pragmatic theory does underwrite scepticism regarding 'the semantics of natural language' and 'knowledge of meaning' (Larson and Segal 1995) within an autonomous sub-personal generative model of language, independent of how it is put to use (i.e. independent of pragmatics) and, indeed, independent of meaning in general. As for more recent CGG itself, strong minimalism anyway seeks to go 'beyond explanatory adequacy' (Chomsky 2004), attributing as little as possible to (modular) unexplained features of UG, seeking explanation in other aspects of human cognition. In the light of that enterprise, situating linguistic meaning within an approach to meaning in general might well be explanatory. 'Meaning' may be 'folk-scientific' but it can't be dismissed in the absence of a theory that explains it away.

Carston (2002, Introduction) is a vigorous defence of RT against the charge that, as a theory of interpretation, it is scientifically impracticable/vacuous. Commenting on her defence in my review (2005, 389), I wrote 'RT is a theory of something quite specific, however general in its application, namely all that is implied by "optimal relevance"…'. One needs to go further in its defence of course, but how much further? As I understand it, RT's account of linguistic communication is rooted in a more general theory of how humans interpret the world. Carston's defence seems to retreat from that, portraying RT as about 'a

mental module… domain specific in that it is activated exclusively by ostensive stimuli' (7). I think this is unfortunate—and even questionable. Stimuli, even humanly produced, don't come ready-labelled '± ostensive'. The assumption that a given stimulus is ostensive is just that—an assumption, inferentially derived. If the claim is that *linguistic* stimuli do come thus ready-labelled, their interpretation still requires a host of occasion/context-specific inferences, as RT itself has shown in response to the problems of what has come to be known as 'Gricean pragmatics'.

Notwithstanding Grice's preoccupation with meaning in general, he sought (particularly in his 'Retrospective Epilogue') to erect a corral around one 'central' species of meaning/signification—formal, 'dictive' (in the main), timeless, linguistic-type meaning, un-relativised to speakers, occasions or contexts, which 'will authorize the assignment of truth conditions to… expressions' (1989, 364), as assumed in 'semantic theory'. Gricean pragmatics is in fact a defence of this and yields a moderate contextualism.

Carston by contrast (2002, 4) suggests that, as 'cognitive pragmatics', RT is 'no longer to be seen as an adjunct to natural language semantics….' As Wedgwood observes, this is exactly the right conclusion in principle but not obviously true in practice. Carston immediately qualifies it with '…though it clearly continues to have essential interaction with semantics'. RT assumes and depends on 'natural language semantics', endorsing the attribution of semantic properties to expressions as non-contextual types and their deterministic decoding by a dedicated module of mind. Logical Form as a level of encoded linguistic representation figures crucially in RT's explicature/implicature distinction. Although Fodorian in spirit, RT has not pursued Fodor's suggestion that 'English has no semantics' (1998, 6) or his contention 'that LF is a level of description not of English, but of Mentalese…' (2008, 78). At least, while agreeing with Fodor in locating semantics in thought, RT also posits a 'linguistic semantics'. Equally, Carston stops short of Recanati's 'radical claim that there is no lexical meaning in the sense of stable encoding' (Carston 2002, 375) and his suggestion (1998, 630) that 'the only meaning which words have is that which emerges in context', taking a less 'extreme', more 'conservative' line 'on which words do encode something, albeit something very schematic…'. I have discussed this and its problems elsewhere (2005, 2007).

It may be true (I think it is) that there can be no naturalistic, causal, mechanistic, sub-personal, modular account of interpretation/meaning. And it may follow that no account of interpretation/meaning is natural science. I leave it to others to decide whether that matters at this stage of the game. As Chomsky has often observed, what counts as natural science has changed in the past. It may in the future, perhaps in the light of questions (and answers) now counting as non-scientific. It is not as if contemporary pragmatics—or cognitive science or linguistics (of the more thoughtful kind)—can claim to have jumped entirely free of 'philosophising'. Carston's defence of RT *as natural science* (on the above terms) is ambitious yet constraining in that it unduly moderates RT's contextualism and, I believe, fails to reflect what is potentially the true scope of the theory.