



Semantics & Pragmatics SoSe 2020

Lecture 1: Organization & Introduction



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Section 1: Organization



Online Teaching

- ▶ Lectures will be recorded and put on moodle. Questions can be asked via moodle or email, and will be answered at the beginning of the next lecture (if relevant for everybody).
- ▶ Tutorials are held interactively.
- ▶ We will go back to classroom teaching if this becomes an option again.

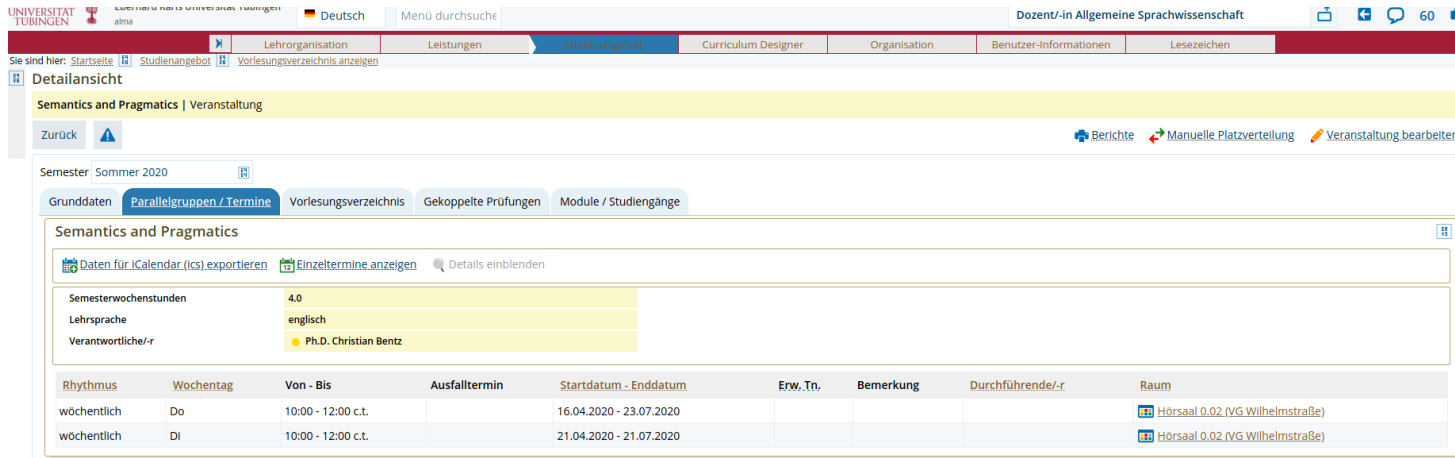
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ALMA (replacing Campus Portal)



The screenshot shows the ALMA system interface for the course "Semantics and Pragmatics" in Summer 2020. The interface includes a navigation menu with options like "Lehrorganisation", "Leistungen", "Studienangebote", "Curriculum Designer", "Organisation", "Benutzer-Informationen", and "Lesezeichen". The course details section shows the following information:

Rhythmus	Wochentag	Von - Bis	Ausfalltermin	Startdatum - Enddatum	Erw. Tn.	Bemerkung	Durchführende/-r	Raum
wöchentlich	Do	10:00 - 12:00 c.t.		16.04.2020 - 23.07.2020				Hörsaal 0.02 (VG Wilhelmstraße)
wöchentlich	Di	10:00 - 12:00 c.t.		21.04.2020 - 21.07.2020				Hörsaal 0.02 (VG Wilhelmstraße)

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Note: Tutorial Week 1 starts on Monday 27 April!



Course Credits

- ▶ Exam on **Thursday 23rd July 2020: 6 ECTS**
- ▶ Handing in (and passing) 3 Tutorial Exercise Sheets (see details below): **3 ECTS**

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Final Schedule (2020)

21/04/2020	Lecture 1	Organization & Introduction
23/04/2020	Lecture 2	Information Theory I
28/04/2020	Lecture 3	Information Theory II
30/04/2020	Lecture 4	Formal Semantics I: Propositional Logic
05/05/2020	Lecture 5	Formal Semantics II: Predicate Logic
07/05/2020	Lecture 6	Formal Semantics III: Second-Order Logic
12/05/2020	Lecture 7	Formal Semantics IV: Type Theory
14/05/2020	Lecture 8	Formal Semantics V: Lambda Calculus
19/05/2020	Lecture 9	Summary: Formal Semantics
21/05/2020		Ascension Day (Christi Himmelfahrt)
26/05/2020	Lecture 10	Applications & Current Research
28/05/2020	Lecture 11	Further Topics in Semantics: Modality
		Pentecost Holidays (Pfingstferien)

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Final Schedule (2020)

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09/06/2020	Lecture 12	Further Topics in Semantics: Evidentiality
11/06/2020		Corpus Christi (Fronleichnam)
16/06/2020	Lecture 13	Introduction Pragmatics
18/06/2020	Lecture 14	Discourse Representation Theory I
23/06/2020	Lecture 15	Discourse Representation Theory II
25/06/2020	Lecture 16	Implicatures
30/06/2020	Lecture 17	Presupposition
02/07/2020	Lecture 18	Speech Acts
07/07/2020	Lecture 19	Summary: Pragmatics
09/07/2020		Test Exam
14/07/2020	Lecture 20	Cross-Linguistic Diversity in Pragmatic Concepts
16/07/2020	Lecture 21	Pragmatic Universals
21/07/2020	Lecture 22	Overview and Discussion
23/07/2020		Exam



Tutorials

Tutorial 1: Hebah Ahmed, hebah.ahmed@student.uni-tuebingen.de

Tutorial 2: Alla Kutkina, alla.kutkina@student.uni-tuebingen.de

	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
8-10					
10-12					Tutorial 2
12-14			Tutorial 1		
14-16	Tutorial 2	Tutorial 1			

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- ▶ You need to go to **only one tutorial (2 SWS)**, so you can choose one of these four options.



Exercise Sheets

- ▶ You have to **pass three Exercise Sheets** to get your 3 ECTS points for the tutorial.
- ▶ You can **choose** which Exercise Sheets to hand in or not.
- ▶ Exercise Sheets will go online **after the thursday lectures** for the following tutorial week.
- ▶ You have to send them via email to your tutor **by midnight on friday (next day!)**, in order to get your pass/fail for this Exercise Sheet.

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Tutorials

Week 1: 27/04-01/05/2020

Week 2: 04/05-08/05/2020

Week 3: 11/05-15/05/2020

Week 4: 18/05-22/05/2020

Week 5: 25/05-29/05/2020

Week 6: 08/06-12/06/2020

Week 7: 15/06-19/06/2020

Week 8: 22/06-26/06/2020

Week 9: 29/06-03/07/2020

Week 10: 06/07-10/07/2020

Week 11: 13/07-17/07/2020

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Notes:

- ▶ Tutorial **Week 11** will be used as a Q&A session for the exam.



Moodle

Please go to moodle and sign up for one of the tutorials
(possible between today 1pm and sunday 26 April 12pm).

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The screenshot shows the Moodle interface for the course 'Semantics and Pragmatics'. The left sidebar contains a navigation menu with items like 'Teilnehmer/innen', 'Kompetenzen', 'Bewertungen', 'Allgemeines', 'Lecture Videos', 'Lecture Slides', 'Tutorial Exercises', 'Literature', and several tutorial sessions. The main content area displays a list of course activities: 'Ankündigungen', 'Tutorial Choice', 'Lecture Videos', 'Lecture Slides', 'Tutorial Exercises', 'Literature', and 'Tutorial 1 Hebah Ahmed (Tuesday 12-2pm)'. Each activity has a 'Bearbeiten' (Edit) button and a 'Material oder Aktivität anlegen' (Add material or activity) button. The 'Literature' section lists three items: 'Kroeger (2019) Analyzing meaning', 'Zimmermann & Sternefeld (2013) Introduction to Semantics', and 'Cover & Thomas (2006) Elements of information theory (Chapter 2)'. The 'Tutorial 1 Hebah Ahmed' section is highlighted with a blue underline.



Learning Strategy

- ▶ Watch the lecture.
- ▶ Go through the lecture slides again.
- ▶ Do the exercises (if possible) before the tutorial.
- ▶ Join the tutorial.

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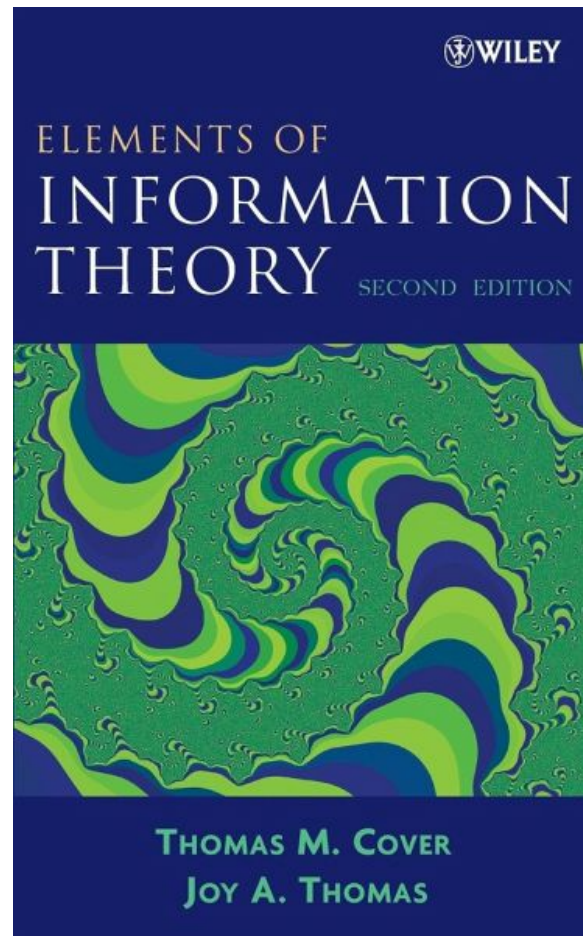


Section 2: Literature



Information Theory

Cover, Thomas M. & Thomas, Joy A. (2006). *Elements of Information Theory*. New Jersey: Wiley & Sons.



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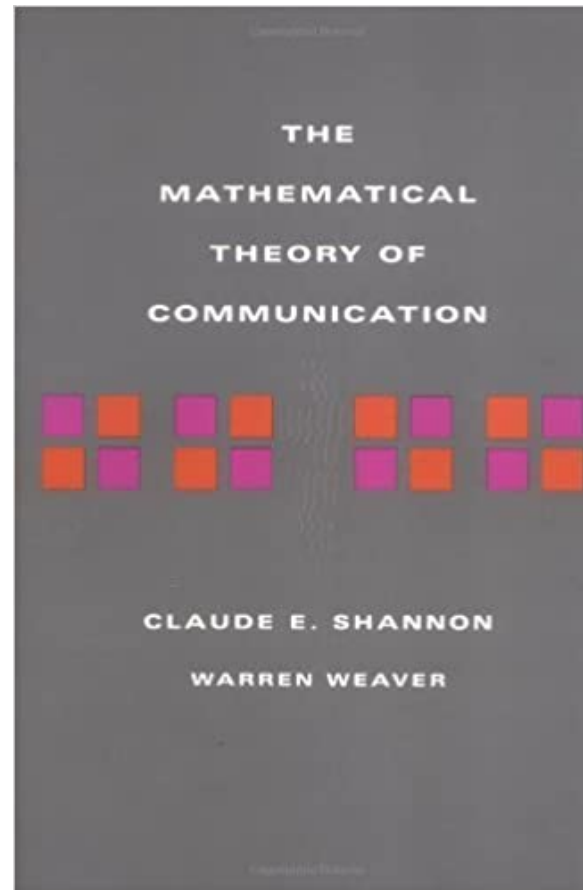
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Information Theory

Shannon, Claude E. & Weaver, Warren (1949). *The mathematical theory of communication*. Chicago: University of Illinois Press.



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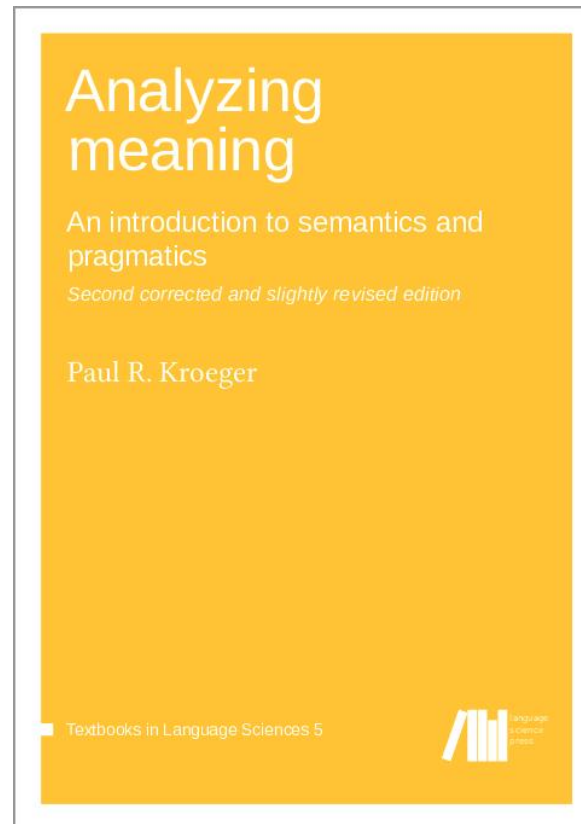
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Semantics

Kroeger, Paul. 2019. *Analyzing meaning: An introduction to semantics and pragmatics. Second corrected and slightly revised edition.* (Textbooks in Language Sciences 5). Berlin: Language Science Press.



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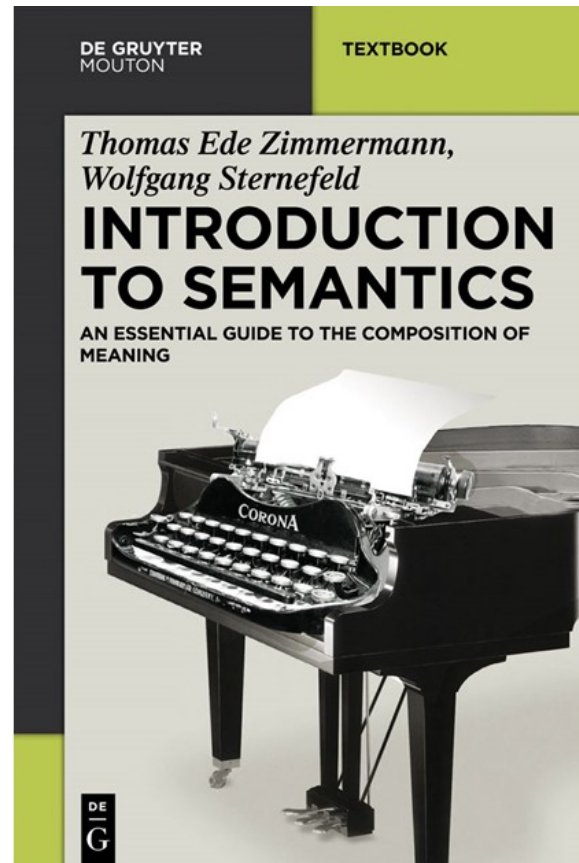
References

download at: <http://langsci-press.org/catalog/book/231>



Formal Semantics

Zimmermann, Thomas E. & Sternefeld, Wolfgang (2013). *Introduction to Semantics. An essential guide to the composition of meaning*. Berlin/Boston: Mouton De Gruyter.



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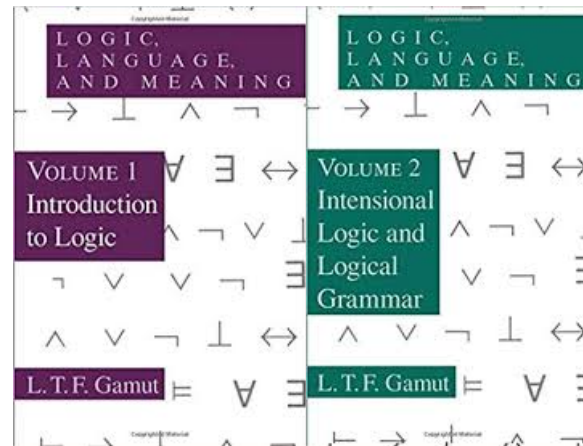
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Formal Semantics

- ▶ Gamut, L.T.F (1991). *Logic, Language, and Meaning. Volume 1: Introduction to Logic*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.
- ▶ Gamut, L.T.F (1991). *Logic, Language, and Meaning. Volume 2: Intensional Logic and Logical Grammar*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.



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Further Introductions

- ▶ Dowty, David R., Wall, Robert E. & Peters, Stanley (1981). *Introduction to Montague semantics*. Dordrecht/Boston/London: D. Reidel Publishing Company.
- ▶ Ferreira, Marcelo (2019). *Curso de semântica formal* (Textbooks in Language Sciences 6). Berlin: Language Science Press.
- ▶ Heim, Irene & Kratzer, Angelika (2008). *Semantics in Generative Grammar*. Malden/Oxford/Carlton: Blackwell Publishing.
- ▶ Kearns, Kate (2011). *Semantics*. New York/London: Palgrave Macmillan.
- ▶ Roussarie, Laurent (2017). *Sémantique formelle. Volume 1: Introduction à la grammaire de Montague* (Textbooks in Language Sciences 4). Berlin: Language Science Press.

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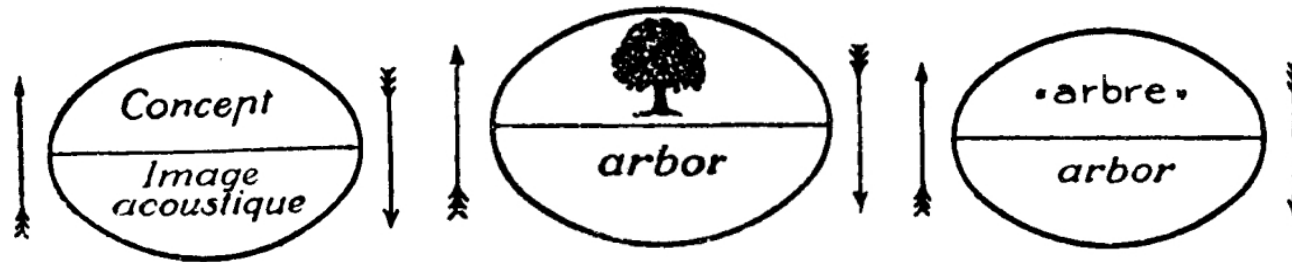


Section 3: Introduction



The Roots

“Signifié et signifiant” at three levels:



Level 1: Abstract Relation

Level 2: Concrete Mapping (Denotation)

Level 3: Metalanguage (Translation)

Saussure (1995). *Cours de linguistique générale*, p. 99.

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Two Fundamental Concepts

- ▶ **Reference:** How does the mapping between form and meaning work? Does it work at all?
- ▶ **Combinatoriality:** How are complex utterances built from smaller units? Are they built from smaller units at all?

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Meaning as Reference

“[...] we will think about how speakers use language to talk about the world. **Referring** to a particular individual, e.g. by using expressions such as *Abraham Lincoln* or *my father*, is one important way in which we talk about the world.”

“Philosophers have found it hard to agree on a precise **definition for reference**, but intuitively we are talking about the speaker’s use of words to “point to” something in the world; that is, to direct the hearer’s attention to something, or to enable the hearer to identify something.”

Kroeger (2019). Analyzing meaning, p. 15 and page 17 respectively.

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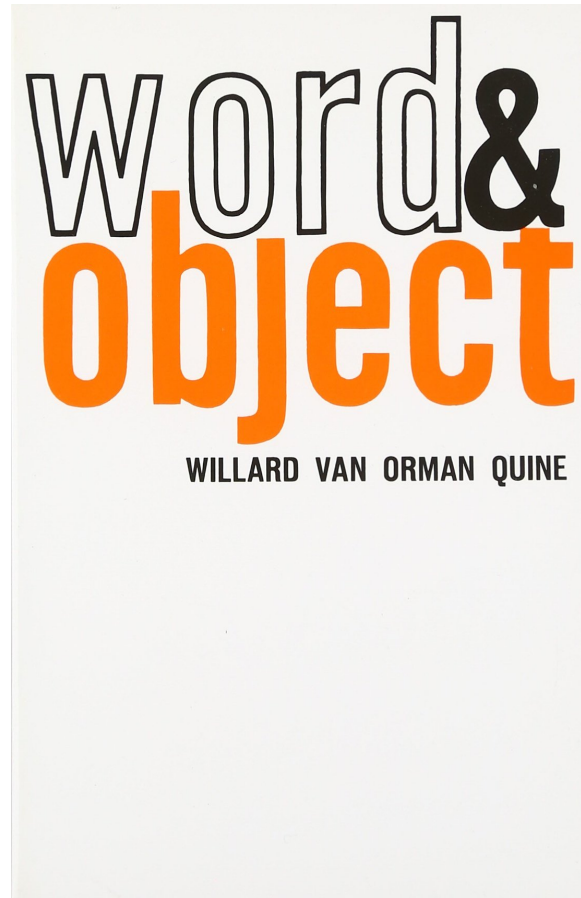
References



Meaning as Reference

“What is relevant rather to our purposes is *radical translation*, i.e., translation of the language of a hitherto untouched people [...] The utterances first and most surely translated in such a case are ones keyed to present events that are conspicuous to the linguist and his informant. A rabbit scurries by, the native says 'Gavagai', and the linguist notes down the sentence 'Rabbit' or 'Lo, a rabbit') as tentative translation, subject to testing in further cases.”

Quine (1960). *Word and object*, p. 28.



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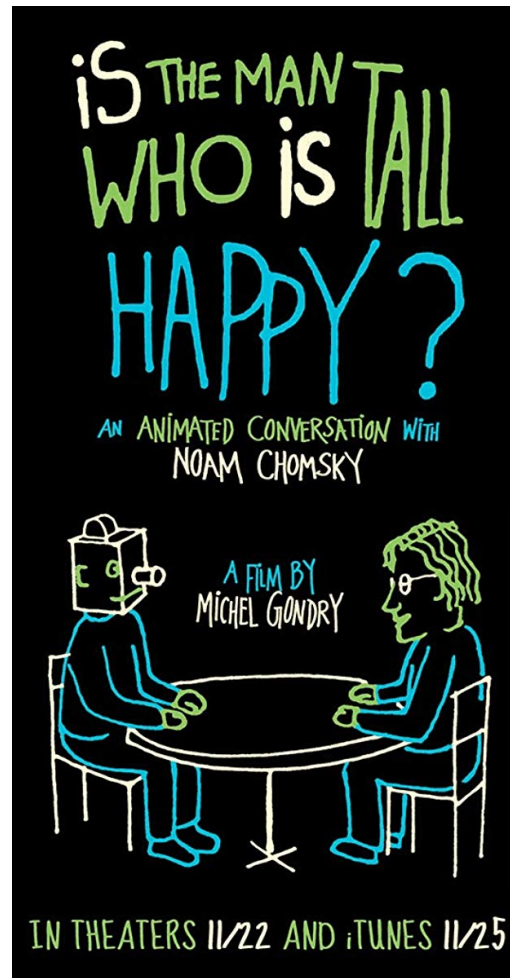
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Against Reference: Words as Mental Representations

“It’s just a classic error that runs right through philosophy and psychology and linguistics right up to the moment. That’s the idea that words... say, meaning-bearing elements, like, say, “tree” or “person” or, you know, “John Smith” or anything... pick out something in the extramental world, something that a physicist could identify so that if I have a word... say, “cow”... it refers to something, and a, you know, scientist knowing nothing about my brain could figure out what counts as a cow. That’s just not true.”

Noam Chomsky



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Semiotic Triangle (Triangle of Reference/Meaning)

“**Semiotics** is the study of the relationship between **signs and their meanings**. In this book we are interested in the relationship between forms and meanings in certain kinds of symbolic systems, namely human languages. The diagram is a way of illustrating how speakers use language to describe things, events, and situations in the world.”

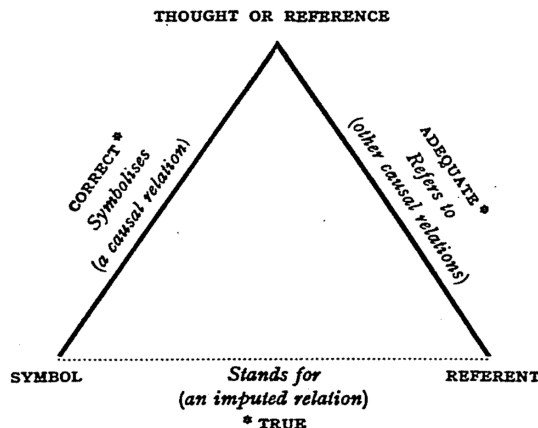
Kroeger (2019). *Analyzing meaning*, p. 16.

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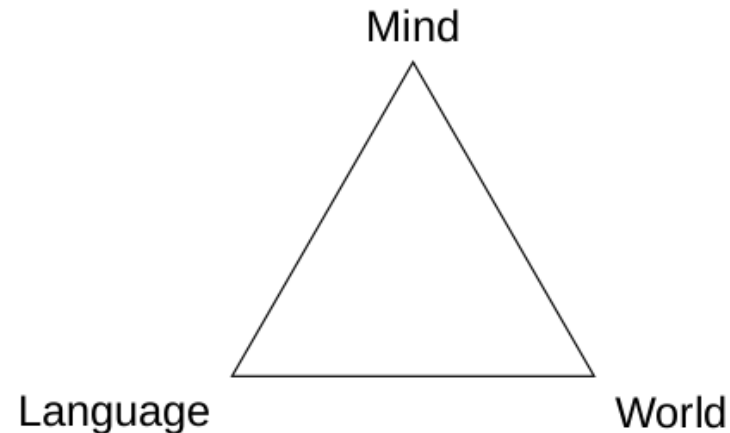
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Ogden & Richards (1923).
The meaning of meaning, p. 11.



Kroeger (2019). *Analyzing meaning*, p. 16.



Denotational vs. Cognitive Semantics

“The basic approach we adopt in this book focuses on the link between linguistic expressions and the world. This approach is often referred to as **denotational semantics** [...] An important alternative approach, **cognitive semantics**, focuses on the link between linguistic expressions and mental representations.”

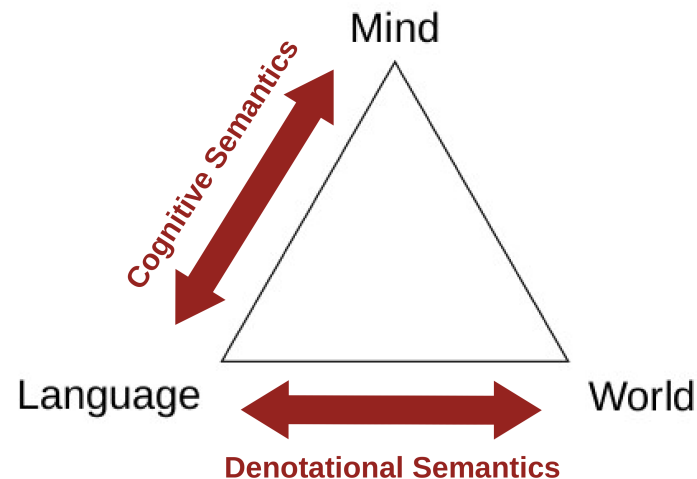
Kroeger (2019). Analyzing meaning, p. 17.

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Combinatoriality/Compositionality

Amharic (amh, Afro-Asiatic)

- (1) zaf təlləq' nāw¹
tree.NOM.SG big be.N.3SG
“The tree is big.”
BIG(t)²

Two words might be productively combined <zaf təlləq'> to yield a new meaning. *Combinatoriality* is a hallmark of human language (and other communication systems) as it enables the *infinite use of finite means*.

¹Amharic is normally written in Ge'ez script. This is a transliteration into Latin script based on Leslau (1995).

²This is the predicate logic notation in Kroeger (2019)

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Problem: Idioms

- (2) Kim ha-t de-n Wald vor lauter
kim have-PRS.3SG ART-ACC.SG forest because.of all.the
Bäum-en nicht ge-seh-en
tree\ -DAT.PL not PTCP-see-PTCP
literal translation: “Kim hasn’t seen the forest because of all the
trees.”
actual meaning: Kim was so concerned with the details that s/he
didn’t see the overall picture.

In the case of idioms (e.g. *kicking the bucket*), the intended meaning of the sentence is not a *linear combinatorial* derivation of its parts. Rather, a complex meaning is assigned to the whole phrase.

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Three “levels” of meaning

1. **Word meaning:** Meaning assigned to individual words.
Example: *kick*; *bucket*
2. **Sentence meaning:** Meaning derived via combination of word meanings (compositional). “The term **sentence meaning** refers to the semantic content of the sentence: the meaning which derives from the words themselves, regardless of context.”
Example: KICK(j,b), literally “John kicks the bucket.”
3. **Utterance meaning** (“speaker” meaning): “The term **utterance meaning** refers to the semantic content plus any pragmatic meaning created by the specific way in which the sentence gets used.” Another definition is: “The totality of what the speaker intends to convey by making an utterance.”
Example: *John dies*.

Kroeger (2019). *Analyzing meaning*, p.5.

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Three “levels” of meaning

Teochew (Southern Min Chinese, Sino-Tibetan)

- (3) Lw chya? pa bɔy?
you eat full not.yet
“Have you already eaten?”

Sentence meaning: “Have you already eaten or not?”, i.e. a request for information.

Utterance meaning: Greeting like “hello” or “how are you” in English.

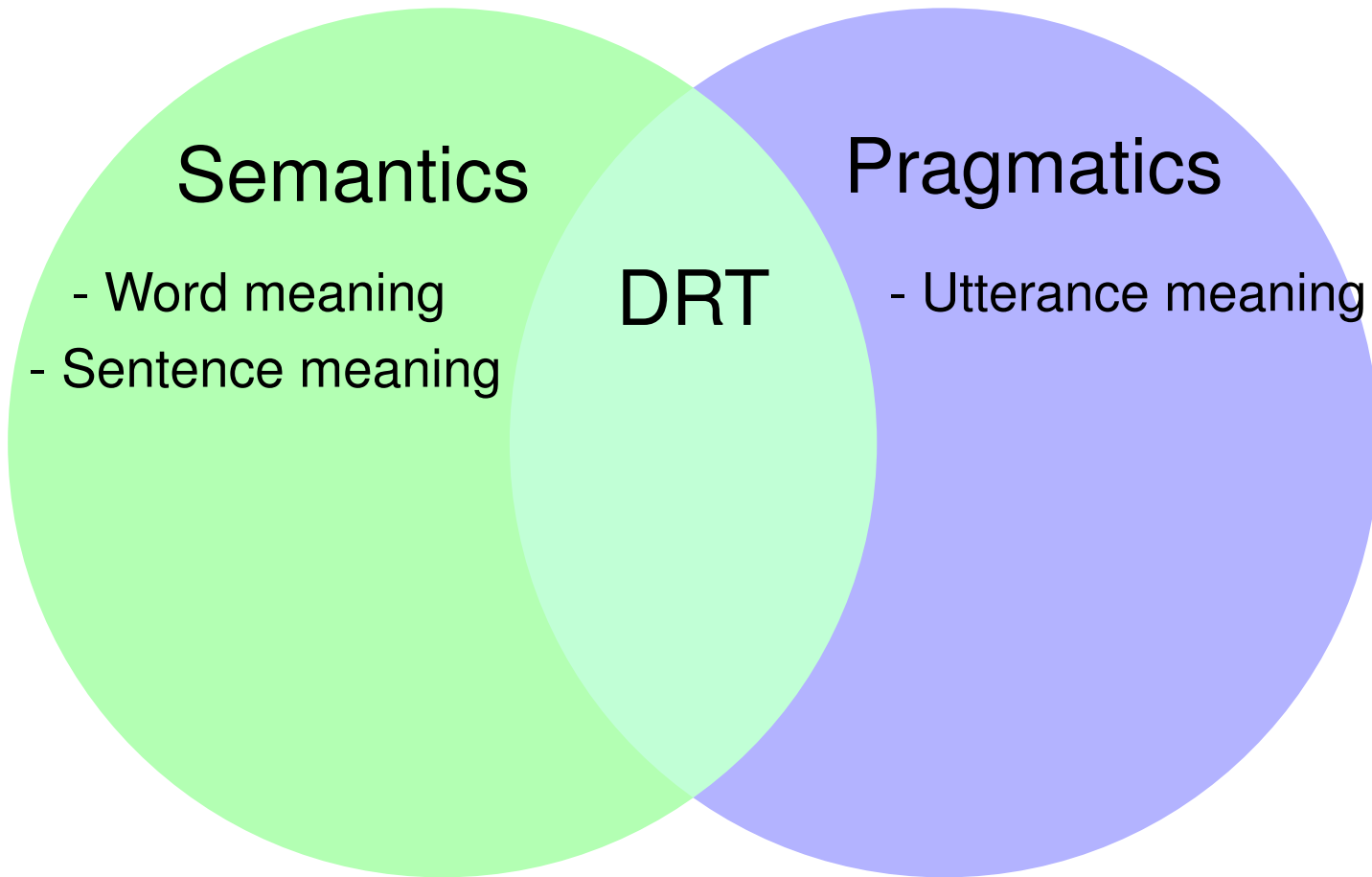
Kroeger (2019). Analyzing meaning, p. 5-6.

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DRT: Discourse Representation Theory



Summary

- ▶ Every syntactic, semantic and pragmatic theory (or all combined) have to deal in some way with the **combinatoriality** of meaning and form.
- ▶ Semantic and pragmatic theories have to deal in some way with the **mapping between meaning and form**.

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- Leslau, Wolf (1995). *Reference grammar of Amharic*. Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz.
- Ogden, C. K., & Richards, I. A. (1923). *The meaning of meaning*. Orlando, Florida: Harcourt Brace Jovanovich.
- Quine, Willard van Orman (1960). *Word and object*. Cambridge, Massachusetts: MIT Press.
- de Saussure, Ferdinand (1995). *Cours de linguistique générale*. Publié par Charles Bailly et Albert Sechehaye avec la collaboration de Albert Riedlinger. Édition critique préparée par Tullio de Mauro. Paris: Payot.

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Thank You.

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