

Key Concepts

Foundations in Pragmatics & Logical Structure

Coordination Test: Used to determine constituents (chunks of meaning) by seeing if they can be coordinated with other similar groups.

Semantic Derivation: Sentence meaning is computed via function application: e.g., $S = V(N) \rightarrow$ Aki runs = T iff Aki runs.

Pragmatics

Compositionality: Meaning built from parts of a sentence.

- Formal semantics = strict composition.
- Cognitive semantics = partial composition.

Relation Among Propositions: Extends beyond sentence truth; pragmatics adds speaker intentions, inference, and context.

Presupposition in Depth

Presupposition vs At-Issue: Sentences can express both a main message and presupposed info. E.g., At-issue: 'I met the boy' vs. Presupposition: 'There was a boy'.

Truth Value Evaluation:

- Step 1: Check presuppositions.
- Step 2: Evaluate the truth of the main clause.

Effect of Articles: “The” introduces presupposition; “a” does not.

Speech Act Theory

Speech Acts:

- Locutionary: the act of saying something.
- Illocutionary: the intended function.
- Perlocutionary: the effect on the hearer.

Performative vs. Constative:

- Performative = the sentence itself performs the act.
- Constative = a sentence describes something and can be true/false.

Felicity Conditions: A performative only works if certain contextual/social criteria are met (e.g., right authority, context).

Dynamic Semantics: Sentences can update the context (even if they're not performatives).

Dynamic Context & Accommodation

Propositions as Worlds: A proposition is a set of possible worlds.

Context Set Updates: Discourse updates occur when the current context set is intersected with the proposition.

Structured Context Model:

Context is composed of the Presuppositions of the speaker & listener, as well as shared common ground.

Accommodation: If a presupposition isn't shared, the speaker implicitly requests the listener to accept it into the common ground.

Conversational Implicature & Grice

Conversational Implicature: Additional meaning inferred from context. Guided by Grice's Cooperative Principle.

Grice's Maxims:

- Quantity: Provide as much information as needed.
- Quality: Be truthful.
- Relation: Be relevant.
- Manner: Be clear.

Flouting Maxims: Intentional violations used to signal deeper or alternative meaning.

Presupposition vs. CI: CIs are cancellable and reinforceable; presuppositions are not.