LING 665/765
Semantics 4/Seminar in Semantics

Winter 2016
CRN 6066
MW 11:35am–12:55pm, Penfield 117

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Course content

This year's edition of Semantics 4/Seminar in Semantics will focus on presupposition, a phenomenon of at the interface of semantics and pragmatics. "Presupposition" refers to linguistically marked content that is understood as taken for granted by a speaker at the outset of a speech act (such as an assertion), and in some sense as not belonging to the main semantic content of that speech act. We will review classic and recent proposals on foundational issues in presupposition, including so-called presupposition projection and presupposition accommodation. We will also investigate the meaning contributions of particular presupposition triggers (i.e. expressions whose use gives rise to presuppositions) and we will study the role of presupposition in patterns of perceived unacceptability (such as polarity sensitivity effects and island effects)

In more detail, the list of topics below serves as a guide to the course. The plan is for us to work through the list in roughly the order shown here, possibly in two or more cycles.

1. Presupposition projection
   e.g., Karttunen 1973; Heim 1983, 1990; Kadmon 2000; Fox 2008; George 2008; Schlenker 2008a,b; Lassiter 2012; Walker 2012; Fox 2012; Sauerland 2013; Tonhauser et al. 2013; Hirsch and Hackl 2014

2. Presupposition accommodation and the proviso problem
   e.g., Geurts 1996; Kadmon 2000; Singh 2007; Van Rooij 2007; von Fintel 2008; Schlenker 2011; Katzir and Singh 2013; Tonhauser 2015

3. Presupposition triggers (hard and soft; truth value judgments, case studies)
   e.g., von Fintel 2004; Abusch 2010; Abrusán 2011a,b; Abrusán 2013; Abrusán and Szendroi 2013; Büring and Križ 2013; von Fintel et al. 2014; Baglini and Francez 2015; Coppock and Beaver 2015; Romoli 2015; Schwarz 2015; Simons et al. 2015

4. Maximize presupposition
   e.g., Heim 1991; Percus 2006; Sauerland 2008; Singh 2011

5. Presupposition and grammar
   e.g., Abels 2004; Abrusán 2014; Crnič 2011, 2013, 2014; Guerzoni 2003; Krifka 1995; Lahiri 1998; Sudo 2012; Schwarz and Simonenko 2015

Requirements and evaluation

	LING 665	LING 765
many homework assignments:	40%	60%
class participation:	10%	20%
two short presentations:	10%	20%
term paper:	40%	–

Students registered for LING 765 will receive a final grade on the Pass/Fall scale.

University policies

Academic integrity

McGill University values academic integrity. Therefore, all students must understand the meaning and consequences of cheating, plagiarism and other academic offences under the code of student conduct and disciplinary procedures (see http://www.mcgill.ca/integrity for more information).

L'université McGill attache une haute importance à l'honnêteté académique. Il incombe par conséquent à tous les étudiants de comprendre ce que l'on entend par tricherie, plagiat et autres infractions académiques, ainsi que les conséquences que peuvent avoir de telles actions, selon le Code de conduite de l'étudiant et des procédures disciplinaires (pour de plus amples renseignements, veuillez consulter le site http://www.mcgill.ca/integrity).

Inclusiveness

As instructors of this course, we endeavor to provide an inclusive learning environment. However, if you experience barriers to learning in this course, do not hesitate to discuss them with us and the Office for Students with Disabilities, (514) 398-6009.

References

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