

Introduction to Referential Semantics

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Core assumptions:

- directed at BA students with some background in propositional and predicate logic
- requiring a weekly workload of about 4 hours in addition to class time for individual reading and assigned work from students, adjusted to needs of the program.
- concluded with a graded exam in class

Objectives:

- Familiarize students with the domain of Semantics in general and with that of Referential Semantics in particular, where semantic interpretation is looked upon as a direct relationship holding between a model of reality and linguistic expressions.
- Test the performance and limitations of various formal languages when it comes to accounting for certain problems raised by natural language(s).
- Endow the students with the necessary tools to carry out independent research within the framework of correspondence theories of meaning.

Course content (provisional):

1. General introduction; the syntax and semantics of propositional calculus
2. The limitations of propositional calculus, the syntax and semantics of predicate calculus
3. The limitations of predicate calculus, extensions
4. Extensional vs. intensional model, intensional propositional calculus (modality)
5. Towards dealing with more semantic types: Type theory
6. Towards dealing with more semantic types: Lambda calculus
7. Bridging sentence-level semantics and dynamic, discourse-level aspects of semantic interpretation: Discourse Representation Theory (introduction, types of DPs and their contributions, anaphora resolution)

8. Discourse Representation Theory: discourse hierarchy, scope dependencies, specificity, solving presupposition

9. General conclusions and discussion

Course materials:

1. Coppock, Elisabeth & Lucas Champollion. 2019. *Invitation to formal semantics* (ms.)

2. Gamut L.T.F. 1991. *Logic, language and meaning*. Vol 1 and 2. Chicago: the University of Chicago Press.

3. Heim, Irene & Angelika Kratzer. 1998. *Semantics in generative grammar*. Oxford: Blackwell.

3. Kamp, Hans & Uwe Reyle. 1993. *From discourse to logic*. Dordrecht: Kluwer Academic Publishers.

4. Partee, Barbara H., Alice ter Meulen & Robert E. Wall. 1990. *Mathematical methods in linguistics*. Dordrecht: Kluwer.