Book Reviews

What Is Said and What Is Not: The Semantics/Pragmatics Interface, edited by Carlo Penco and Filippo Domaneschi. Stanford: CSLI Publications, 2013, x + 344 pages. ISBN 978-1-57586-667-3

The question of how to draw the distinction between semantics and pragmatics is central to the philosophy of language. As the title suggests, this volume seeks to approach the question via the intuitive and yet controversial notion of *what is said* in uttering a sentence, and the way that this notion affects our understanding of other phenomena. In particular, an emphasis is placed on how developments in the last decade or so have shed new light on this matter.

Grice thought that *what is said* in uttering a sentence is closely related to the conventional meaning of the sentence; he only explicitly allowed the time of the utterance, the fixing of any referential expressions, and the resolution of any ambiguities to be contextual factors that are relevant to such content. A tradition has followed this approach in seeking to place an emphasis on the role of semantic processes in determining *what is said*. Such views are represented in the *Semantics First* section of this volume. A distinct approach to the matter takes it that various pragmatic processes are essential to fix *what is said*. This approach is represented in the *Pragmatics First* section. The final *Alternatives* section consists of papers from authors who have sought to reject assumptions held by one or both of the aforementioned groups. But despite this tripartite distinction, the editors are right to make clear in the preface that while it is tempting to subsume each paper into a general category, close attention should be paid to the arguments of each individual piece (p. x). Indeed, it proves difficult to arrange the available views even into the general sections outlined. For instance, minimalism is placed in the *Semantics First* section, even though few minimalists would agree with the characterisation of the view as claiming "that 'what is said' by an ut-

terance is fully determined by syntax and semantics" (p. 13). Instead, many minimalists allow that *what is said* will be a context-sensitive matter and in so doing hold many points of agreement with those views represented in the *Pragmatics First* section.

Stojnic and Lepore's contribution—the first of the collection—represents this point concerning minimalism well. They follow Cappelen and Lepore (Herman Cappelen and Ernest Lepore, *Insensitive Semantics*, Oxford, 2005) in arguing that it is not the task of a semantic theory to assign true indirect speech reports to utterances; a semantic theory does not have to account for what an utterance said. Instead, Stojnic and Lepore suggest a rather novel minimalist approach. They argue that a semantic theory should be based upon Lewis' two ideas of the conversational scoreboard and coordination. A conversational scoreboard is an abstract record of all the information communicated and exchanged between conversational participants. Conversational participants face the challenge of updating their scoreboards in the same way as one another, so as to avoid misunderstanding. To avoid this coordination problem, participants will make use of conventions, defined here as a regularity observed by agents with a view to matching their behaviour with other agents. Stojnic and Lepore argue that it is the job of a semantic theory to track the shared knowledge of linguistic conventions that agents will use to adjust their scoreboard upon hearing an utterance. More formally, the adequacy constraint on a semantic theory is as follows:

> A semantic theory *T* for a language *L* should assign as semantic content to an utterance *u* of a sentence *S* of *L* whatever *u* of *S* contributes to the conversational record in virtue of coordination. (p. 33)

As Stojnic and Lepore allow, a semantic theory of this kind will prove quite liberal in what it takes to be semantic phenomena, including presuppositions and conventional implicatures. But Lewis's notion of a convention is concerned with action in general, and one wonders if such a view is properly able to distinguish between linguistic and non-linguistic conventions. Chess players may exploit the conventions of the game to communicate a great deal of information with an utterance such as "Your queen is exposed", but it is not the job of semantic theory to track such conventions. The view will benefit from further discussion on this matter.

The broad views of minimalism and indexicalism are represented well in the *Semantics First* section. Both views take the output of semantic processes to be a proposition, but indexicalism differs from minimalism in taking this proposition to be *what is said* in uttering that sentence. In doing so, indexicalism takes the appeal to contextual features within semantic processes to be far more common. It is appropriate that an abridged version of Stanley's "Context and Logical Form" is reprinted here as the third chapter, as this has emerged as probably one of the most influential forms of indexicalism.

There are, of course, forms of indexicalism aside from Stanley's, and this is represented in Vignolo's contribution. In "Surprise Indexicalism", he argues that there are more indexical expressions than just the set of indexicals and demonstratives. Otherwise put, there are many more expressions whose (Kaplanian) character allows for a variation in content across contexts. Details permitting, both colour adjectives and comparative adjectives (such as 'tall') are indexical in this way. According to Vignolo, positing such indexicality is only justified in those cases that admit of incompleteness arguments. Cappelen and Lepore (Herman Cappelen and Ernest Lepore, *Insensitive Semantics*, Oxford, 2005 pp. 59-69), however, have argued that incompleteness arguments can be given for any sentence in a natural language, and so the move to positing extra indexical expressions is the first step on a slippery slope to radical contextualism. Further, they have argued that intuitions regarding such cases miss the point as they are metaphysical intuitions regarding what properties exist, rather than semantic intuitions. Vignolo responds to both arguments. Regarding the latter argument, he argues that such intuitions are in fact semantically relevant insofar as a semantic theory must account for the implicit knowledge required to understand a language. As such, an incompleteness argument tells us that competent speakers feel unable to evaluate the truth of a sentence independently of a context, and so we are given reason to suppose that such a sentence is context-dependent. But crucially, however, Vignolo must also respond to Cappelen and Lepore's "slippery slope" argument so as to avoid the proliferation of indexicality. After all, just as a sentence such as 'John is tall' leads us to raise the question of what standard John is tall according to, sentences that are not usually claimed to be incomplete (e.g. 'John went to the gym') raise questions of a similar

nature (e.g. how did John go? Did he go inside? How long for?). Here, Vignolo simply rejects the claim that speakers do not know how to evaluate sentences such as 'John went to the gym' independently of contextual completions (p. 71). But given that Cappelen and Lepore have given us reason to question the distinction between complete and incomplete sentences, Vignolo's argument would benefit from further reason to maintain such a distinction.

The difference between the *Semantics First* and *Pragmatics First* sections is perhaps best described as one of tradition and approach, rather than as one of theoretical claims. For instance, Claudia Bianchi begins the *Pragmatics First* section by arguing that the context relevant to reference-fixing in the case of indexicals and to force-fixing in the case of illocutionary acts is the context intended by the speaker and made available to the hearer. And while identifying the proper role for speaker's intentions in semantic and pragmatic theory is a crucial issue, Bianchi's conclusion by itself is not something that the minimalist and indexicalist views outlined in the first section are forced to deny. A similar, though not identical, point can be made regarding Catherine Wearing's contribution in chapter eight. She argues for the view that metaphorical content is realised at the level of *what is said* rather than implicature, via a defence of the scope argument. Perhaps most intriguing about this article is the suggestion made towards the end that the realisation of metaphor in *what is said* could even be accommodated by Stanley's indexical approach, which claims that all context-sensitivity is mandated by a variable present in the logical form of a sentence (p. 157). However, this would seem to require that every expression-type capable of being used metaphorically has some kind of metaphor-variable realised in its syntactic contribution.

Robyn Carston's contribution stands out by directly challenging the view held by both minimalists and indexicalists (and indeed some pragmatists) that word meanings are not fully-fledged concepts complete with a denotation. Her argument is twofold. First, the context-sensitivity of word meanings suggest that there is no one privileged concept that constitutes the meaning of an expression, and that instead each expression only provides a conceptual schema that must be fleshed out into a concept on each occasion of use. Secondly, Carston points to experimental evidence based on processing considerations

that suggests that in the case of polysemous expressions, hearers first access a general, underspecified conceptual schema and then flesh it out into one particular concept based on subsequent contextual cues. This underspecificity of polysemous expressions generalises insofar as all open-class expressions are "polysemous or at least potentially polysemous" (p. 192).

The *Alternatives* section is a lively one that consists of six papers from a range of different viewpoints. Joana Garmendia uses chapter twelve to argue that the social rewards associated with ironic communication is better accommodated by a Gricean implicature-based account. In chapter fifteen, Michael Devitt outlines three flaws that he argues are prevalent among the pragmatist approach represented in the second section.

Semantic relativism, which has attracted much discussion over the past decade, is represented (albeit indirectly) in John MacFarlane's paper "Non indexical Contextualism", reprinted here as chapter thirteen. Here, MacFarlane outlines a form of context-sensitivity in which the truth value, but not the content, of a proposition is dependent upon a parameter, the value of which is determined by the context of utterance. He labels such a view non-indexical contextualism, which given the fact that this collection already uses the labels of contextualism and indexicalism in quite a distinct way, is perhaps not the most helpful name. Nevertheless, his exposition of the view is clear enough so as to avoid confusion.

MacFarlane's paper is useful when considering Corazza and Dokic's contribution in chapter fourteen, which outlines their situationalist view. They argue that contextualists, indexicalists, and minimalists alike have laid too large a cognitive burden upon conversational participants. For a hearer to understand an utterance, it is not necessary that she must entertain a thought with the unarticulated constituents that it is argued may accompany such an utterance via free enrichment. However, the truth value of such an utterance (and indeed of the corresponding thought) can be dependent upon parameters not present in the content of an utterance, purely in virtue of the fact that such utterances are situated. The idea here is that utterances and propositions are anchored to situations, and these situations can affect the truth value of these propositions without doing so via its content.

As Corazza and Dokic note, the proposal is most akin to a form of non indexical contextualism outlined by MacFarlane in which the truth of a proposition is relative to a "counts-as" parameter. As such, situationalism can be seen as differing from many other relativist proposals, not only in that there is a single privileged context from which semantic evaluation should take place, but also in the fact that relativising the truth of propositions to a situation means that there is no restraint on what situational factors can affect the truth value of a proposition. Whereas many relativist proposals suggest merely that the truth of a proposition should be relativised to a specific parameter such as a standard of taste or an epistemic standard, situationalism allows a variation on nearly any parameter to affect the truth of a proposition. As such, free enrichment of communicated content is not required on this view. One fruitful topic of discussion for the situationalist proposal would be whether, despite our utterances and thoughts being anchored, free enrichment can nevertheless occur on some occasions, despite not being necessary to account for the intuitive truth values of such utterances.

One distinctive theme that recurs throughout this collection is how modes of presentation (both linguistic and cognitive) are to be accommodated within semantic theory. In chapter nine, François Récanati approaches this by arguing that the semantic reference of a definite description is fixed by the mental file associated with the singular predicate contained within the definite description, rather than by the singular predicate itself. Kepa Korta also confronts reference and cognition in chapter eleven when he argues that there is no single proposition called *what is said* that can serve as both what a speaker meant in uttering something, and the basis from which to calculate implicatures. This is because across different contexts propositions that differ in the kind of cognitive fix contained within them are required in order to calculate implicatures. In some, the hearer must access the referential content in order to calculate implicatures, while in others, only the speaker-bound or utterance-bound content is required.

Finally in chapter sixteen, following Kripke's famous puzzle about belief, John Perry seeks to show why inferring 'Pierre said that London is pretty' from 'Pierre said "London is pretty"' (which Perry labels *disquotation*) is not valid, and neither is inferring 'Pierre

believes that London is pretty' from 'Pierre said that London is pretty' (which Perry labels *content explanation*). Crimmins and Perry (Mark Crimmins and John Perry, "The Prince and the Phone Both: Reporting Puzzling Belief", *Journal of Philosophy*, 86, 1989) argued that the latter inference is not valid because a belief report may not properly track the *notions* that the agent (Pierre) uses to think about the relevant objects. Such notions are present in belief reports as unarticulated constituents, and so the truth value of the belief report will partly turn on whether they are the notions used by the agent. Here Perry builds on this approach and argues that *disquotation* may not properly track the *roles* that an object plays in a speaker's life. Just as notions are represented as unarticulated constituents in belief reports, roles are represented as unarticulated constituents in indirect speech reports. Perry's innovative proposal aside, it is fitting that he should complete this volume as the influence that his work has had is plain to see throughout.

This collection constitutes an excellent survey of the issues surrounding the pragmatic/semantic distinction, with fine contributions from esteemed authors. What this collection serves to show is that the notion of *what is said* is philosophically crucial, and not only because it is intuitive. How it is accounted for will affect and be affected by a vast range of phenomena including context-sensitivity, metaphor, irony, speech acts, modes of presentation, and methodological considerations. As such, one key way for this discussion to develop, which this collection contributes towards, is from further integration of these areas of research. And yet the resulting complexity of the issues is handled ably by the editors, who provide the student reader unaccustomed to the area with a historical introduction and a brief summary of each chapter. This volume will therefore prove useful for researchers and students alike.

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