Modelling Oppressive Speech/Norms and Social Meaning

23-24 March 2020

Abstracts

DAY 1: 23 March

Mary Kate McGowan: “Oppressive Speech and Accommodation: On the Role of Interlocutors”

Abstract:

Mihaela Popa-Wyatt & Anton Benz & Christoph Hesse: “Rigging the Game—3 Dimensions of Power”

Abstract:

Roland Mühlenbern: “Politeness and Reputation in Cultural Evolution—a Game-theoretic Approach”

Abstract:

Stephen Barker: “A Stripped Down Framework for Slurs”

Abstract:

David Pietraszewski: “

Abstract:

David Beaver:

Abstract:
Lynne Tirrell: “Discursive Epidemiology”

Abstract:
Laura Caponetto: "Accommodated Authority: Flipping Langton's Picture".

Abstract: Rae Langton (2015, 2018a, 2018b) has recently argued that ordinary speakers can acquire informal authority via a mechanism akin to presupposition accommodation: a speaker acts as if they had authority and they can end up acquiring it provided that nobody objects. I here flip this picture and argue that the reverse of Langton’s pattern is a common and interesting phenomenon as well: a speaker acts as if their hearer had a certain authority, and the hearer can end up obtaining it solely by playing along. To illustrate my claim an example may help. Imagine that, due to the influence of a patriarchal family, Reese always asks Mike, her husband, for permission before doing certain things: “May I go to the cinema with Komarine this afternoon?”; “Is it okay with you if I look for a job?”. Mike has no right to either grant or refuse his wife permission to go out or to look for a job. However, since Reese’s requests presuppose that Mike has that right, that he has authority over her, the conversational score will adjust to include that presupposition, unless Mike objects. Interestingly, in this sort of scenarios, the one who is called upon to speak up is the person whose authority would otherwise be increased: Mike is the one who has to uncover the falsity of the presupposition carried by Reese’s requests, but he is also the one who would gain authority if he avoids challenging it. After pointing out that this double dynamic of authority acquisition and conferral applies both to practical and epistemic authority, I conclude by drawing some of its implications for women and other relatively disempowered groups who are socially hooked into deference and self-doubt.

Stephanie Solt: 

Uli Sauerland: "The Sociolinguistic Subset Generalization"

Abstract: Studying a case of a sociolinguistic variable "above and beyond phonology", Torres Cacoullos (2001) notes its dependence "bleaching and layering". We propose to capture the same intuition as the Social Subset Generalization (SSG): Expressions X and Y can only be sociolinguistic variables if the logical meaning of X is a subset or superset of that of Y. I discuss both the empirical support in favor of the SSG and possibilities for a theoretical account of the SSG.


Elin McCready: "Silencing and Normativity"

Abstract: