Ling 305.01
Semantics
Fall 2022

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TEACHING ASSISTANT: Furkan Dikmen (furkan.dikmen@boun.edu.tr)
CLASS TIMES & LOCATION: TTFF 7856, NH 403 & M 2181
OFFICE HOURS: By appointment

TEXTBOOKS*: Parts of,
C&M Chierchia & McConnel Ginet *Meaning and Grammar*
C&M Coppok&Champollion 2022 *Invitation to Formal Semantics*, draft
F&al Victoria Fromkin et al *Linguistics: An Introduction to Linguistic Theory*
H&K Heim & Kratzer *Semantics in Generative Grammar,*
P&al: Partee et al. *Mathematical Methods in Linguistics*
PP: Portner, H. Paul (2005): *What is Meaning? Fundamentals of Formal Semantics*
L&S: Larson & Seagal *Knolwege of Meaning* among others.
Gamut: LFT. Gamut *Logic Language and Meaning* VOL 1.

*I will provide electronic copies of the relevant chapters or parts of chapters on line (in Moodle) on a weekly basis.

Course Description

The primary objective of Semantics Theory is to provide an understanding of how human competent speakers of a given language come to comprehend the meaning of simple expressions (e.g. words, morphemes) or complex expressions (e.g. compounds, phrases, sentences, utterances) of their language and know how these expressions can be used in a given situation to convey information. This is a highly complex and structured ability, which requires a rigorous and formally explicit descriptive apparatus in order to be properly characterized.

The course offers both an introduction to some of the main facts and discoveries about meaning in natural language (the empirical domain) as well as an introduction to some of the descriptive tools/apparatus (**set theory, propositional logic, mathematical functions)** that semanticist use to understand them.

Course Requirements

1. **Readings.** The semantic literature requires a good deal of attention to detail. This is why the reading material assigned for each week will be relatively little but you will be expected to read it slowly and carefully and to make sure that you understand what you are reading.

   *I will provide electronic copies of the relevant chapters or parts of chapters on line (in Moodle) on a weekly basis.

2. **Class attendance and participation**: because of the complexity of the course topic, attendance to the lectures is strongly recommended. Moreover, your active participation in class discussions is encouraged. This notwithstanding, you should understand that sometimes I may need to interrupt class discussions on interesting but tangential topics (but you are welcome and encouraged to schedule individual meetings to have your questions addressed). **Class notes and handouts will be posted on Moodle before class.**

3. **Homework assignments:** Semantics is best learned by doing problem sets!!! There will be up to **6 homework assignments**. These assignments will serve to test your understanding of the material covered in class and help you keep up with readings and lectures. Furthermore, your answers will provide me with continuous and reliable feedback. Even when you don't get everything right at the first try, what is essential is that you come to understand the solutions and our comments on your attempts before you move on to the next step. The problem sets are always due at the beginning of class on the due date, because some of them will be discussed at the beginning of the class on the date they are "due."**. If you miss class for any reason, it is your responsibility to find out whether a problem set has been assigned and to submit your assignment on time.**

   Lateness policy: Points will be deducted from problem sets, which are handed in late, at the rate of 20% of the total score per day. (A problem set handed in on the due date, but after the beginning of class meeting, will have a 10% taken off).

Although there will be a good deal of exploratory discussion in class, **most of your actual learning will consolidate only as you work on your readings and homework assignments**.

4. **Exams.** There will be one midterm and one final exam covering different portions of the material.

Grading scheme:
Problem sets: 30%
Midterm: 35 %
Final (NON CUMULATIVE): 35%

Special Dates: October 28 Republic Day NO CLASS

Preliminary Weekly Schedule (Subject to change)

Week 1 **Course Presentation**

Week 2 **Meaning, Truth and Semantic Relations**
Readings: F&al. Ch.7 sections 7.1-7.2 PP pp 1-3 and 11- 22, C&C Ch1, L&S Ch.1

Week 3 **Compositionality and Simple Predication: Sets**
Readings: PP Ch3 section 3.6, P&Al. Ch.1 and handout on sets

Week 4 **Compositionality and Simple Predication**
Readings: F&al. Ch.7 section 7.3

Week 5-6 **Negation, Coordination and Transitive Verbs**

Readings: Gamut Ch 2, 2.1 2.2, 2.5 vol.1, class notes on complex predicates and TT
(Week 5: no class on Friday Oct. 28)

Weeks 7 **From Sets to Functions**
Readings: H&K Ch. 2 sections 2.1, 2.2, 2.3 and 2.5

Week 8: **Modification**
Readings: PP Ch. 4 sections 4.1. and 4.2 & class notes

Week 9 Tuesday: **Exam Review**
*******Friday November 25 : <u>In class midterm</u>******************
(The midterm will cover material discussed and assignments handed out to you in weeks 1 to 7)

Week 10 **Quantifiers and Negative Polarity**
Readings: PP Ch. 6 section 6.1 and 6.3, additional readings TBA

Week 11 **Presupposition and Definite Description**
Readings: PP Ch. 5, sections 5.1, 5.2, 5.4.1, and 5.4.2

Week 12 **Pragmatics: Implicatures**
Readings: Grice (1972) *Logic and Conversation,* Gamut Ch.6 vol.2 sections TBA

Week 13 **Implicatures & Disjunction Revisited**
Readings: TBA

Week 14 **Exam Review**