Pragmatics and Reasoning

Grice & Austin

Austin: Introduction

- Speech acts have three parts
  - Locutionary act
  - Illocutionary act
  - Perlocutionary act

Austin: Locutionary Act

- A locutionary act is made of three parts
  - Phonetic act: uttering certain noises
  - Phatic act: uttering certain words/grammar
  - Retic act: uttering words with certain sense and reference

Austin: Illocutionary Act

- Illocutionary acts:
  - Performing a locutionary act with a certain force
    - order
    - warning
    - assuring
    - promising
    - etc.

Austin: Perlocutionary Act

- Perlocutionary acts:
  - By performing the locutionary act, we produce effects in our listeners (and/or speaker, other persons)
    - feelings
    - thoughts
    - actions

Searle: Introduction

- Student of Austin
- Built on Austin's theory
  - Added five mutually exclusive and jointly exhaustive types of illocutionary acts

Searle: Illocutionary Acts

- Representative/Assertive: speaker commits to the truth of the statement (e.g. *It's raining*)
- Directive: speaker tries to get the listener to act in a certain way (e.g. *Close the door!*)
- Commissive: speaker commits to acting in the way (s)he said (e.g. *I'll finish the paper tomorrow*)

Searle: Illocutionary Acts

- Expressive: speaker expresses in the sincerity of the illocutionary act (e.g. *I'm glad it's raining!*)
- Declarative: speaker performs an action representing his/herself as performing the action (e.g. *I name this ship the Queen Elizabeth*)

Grice: Introduction

- Developed theory of conversation
- What we say literally isn't always what we mean
  - conversational implicatures
  - e.g. if I ask someone to lunch and they reply *I have a 1pm class I'm not prepared for.* I know they aren't going to lunch, even though they didn't explicitely say so.

Grice: Maxims

- Quantity
  - Make your contribution as informative as is required but no more so than is necessary for the current purposes
- Quality
  - Try to make your contribution true
  - Don’t say anything you know to be false or you don’t have evidence to support

Grice: Maxims

- Relation
  - Be relevant
- Manner
  - Be perspicuous
  - Avoid obscurity of expression and ambiguity
  - Be brief and orderly
  - Frame your statement to facilitate a reply from your conversation partner

Grice Violations

Grice Violations

- Violating Grice’s maxims can lead to a few consequences
  - obvious hyperbole (like in the exercises), which the listener can easily understand
  - deceit
  - jokes

Violation Examples: Jokes

- Quantity
  - *Excuse me, do you know what time it is?*
  - *Yes.*
- Relation
  - *How many surrealists does it take to screw in a lightbulb?*
  - *Fish!*

Violation Examples: Jokes

- Manner
  - *Do you believe in clubs for young men?*
  - *Only when kindness fails.*
- Quality
  - *Why did the Vice President fly to Panama?*
  - *Because the fighting is over.*

Can you pick out the maxims being violated?

Miscellaneous Shows: https://youtu.be/oI9tFOcVnV4

Big Bang Theory:
https://youtu.be/vEM8gZCWQ2w

Can you pick out the maxims being violated?

https://youtu.be/sKC8QvsDfkc?t=2m35s

https://youtu.be/sKC8QvsDfkc?t=5m42s

https://youtu.be/sKC8QvsDfkc?t=10m2s

https://youtu.be/sKC8QvsDfkc?t=13m22s

Pragmatics and Computers

Where Computers Fail

Watson

- IBM supercomputer
- Competed on Jeopardy
- Won (by a huge margin!)

Watson on Jeopardy

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=rya9qaUJfeY&list=PLobLdWyQO9r0FEcquYA1XqcNb7XtiSg6X

Watson: How does it work?

- Observe: gets data from a bunch of sources (like Twitter, journals, newpapers, etc.)
- Interpret: organize the information it received and creates systems to access it more easily (like graphs)

Watson: How does it work?

- Evaluate: experts provide Watson with information on how to interpret the data
- Decide: Watson uses knowledge from previous steps to make new decisions given input (like diagnose patients)

Watson: Mistakes

- “What is leg?”
  - Correct answer: “What is missing a leg?”
- “What is Toronto?”
  - Category is U.S. Cities
  - Correct answer: “What is Chicago?”

Watson: Where is it now?

- IBM sells it as software and a supercomputer for hospitals to diagnose patients and a few other applications
- Potential other applications?

Other Challenges

- Understanding speech (accents, articulation, speed, etc.)
- Word-sense disambiguation
- Context disambiguation, social intelligence
- Human-like production (accent, articulation, non-verbal communication, etc.)

Careers in Language Science

Fields that do Language Science

- Linguistics
- Psychology
- Computer Science
- Cognitive Science
- Language Science
- Philosophy
- Neuroscience
- Linguistic Anthropology
- Communications
- Speech Language Pathology
- Ear and Hearing

Careers in Academia

- Professor (PhD)
- Researcher (public) (PhD/MS)
- Lab Technician / Manager (BA/MS)
- Academic Journal Editor (PhD)
- Scientific Advisory Committee (PhD/MS)
- Institutional Bureaucrat (MS)

Careers in Private Sector

- Marketing / Public Relations (BA/MS)
- Computational Linguist (MS)
  - Language Understanding (Siri)
  - Real-Time Translation
- Researchers (private sector) (MS/PhD)
- Literary Editor (BA/MS/PhD)
- Developing Languages for Hollywood (BA)
- Forensic Linguist (BA/MS)

Non-Direct Application

- Education Policy (BA/MS)
- Teaching English (BA)
- Human Resources (BA)
- Law School (BA)
- FBI, CIA, DOD (BA/MS)

The Importance of Experience

- Curriculum Vitae
  - Research Experience, Papers, Presentations
  - Internship
- Portfolio
  - Projects that you have completed
- Letters of Reference

Thanks for a great course!

Please take the time now to write up a one page summary of what you learned in this course. If you need a reminder about what we covered, check your syllabus.