

The Language Revolution
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Fall 2011

Class 9
Donnellan to Kripke



Small Comments on Strawson

- Words don't refer, people refer
- The bearers of truth values are utterances, not propositions (Frege) or sentences (Russell)
 - Sentence tokens?
 - Sentence types?
- Strawson's view is called presuppositionalism
 - Truth-value gaps for sentences
- Pragmatics
 - Presupposition triggers
 - Factive verbs (know)
 - Temporal clauses (before you were born)
 - Counterfactual conditionals (if it were sunny)
 - Questions (what's the next topic)
 - Lewis, Stalnaker, and Common Ground

Taylor on Donnellan

Reference

- How language hooks onto the world
- Language has content.
 - Aboutness
 - The subjects of our assertions
- Some subjects are general.
 - 'Whales are mammals.'
 - Generalizations (induction, abstractions) from particular expressions.
 - This whale is a mammal and that whale is a mammal, etc.
- Particular subjects
 - Ostension ('this' and 'that')
 - Names
 - Definite descriptions ('the F')
- Call particular subjects singular terms

What is the Semantic Value of a Singular Term?

- Naive View: the object itself
 - ▶ Augustine, Mill
- Objections to the Naive View
 - ▶ Swift: it's too naive
 - But mockery (eye rolling, gaping stare) is not an argument.
 - ▶ Locke: communication would be impossible
 - But the veil of ideas is worse.
 - ▶ Frege
 - Cognitive Content
 - Empty Reference
 - Opaque Contexts
- Frege's solution: senses
 - ▶ The sense of a name (or definite description) is its mode of presentation
 - Sense descriptivism

Worries for Frege

- Ontological Excess
 - Ockham's razor
 - Russell: abbreviational descriptivism
 - Logical form is not grammatical form
 - Sentence tokens or sentence types?
- Donnellan
 - Descriptivism doesn't work for definite descriptions
 - What about names?
 - Alpha beta
 - J. L. Aston-Martin