

Philosophy 5342
Fall, 2016

W.G. Lycan

PHILOSOPHY OF LANGUAGE: LANGUAGE AND POWER

Texts

Jenny Thomas, *Meaning in Interaction: An Introduction to Pragmatics*.
Pb, Longmans.

Recommended: Penelope Brown and Stephen C. Levinson, *Politeness:
Some Universals in Language Usage*. Pb, Cambridge U.P.

WGL contact

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Written work

Option 1: Four short papers (ca. 1500 words) during the semester, due on
September 13, October 18, November 15, and December 6. Topics will be of your
own choosing, but I will offer suggestions.

Or 2: If you like, after September 13 you may substitute one 3000-word
paper for two consecutive shorter ones.

Or, 3: Write just one short paper due September 13 and one term paper due
December 6.

Syllabus

August 30: Theoretical background. Truth conditions, speech acts, and
implicature.

Reading: Thomas, Chs. 2 and 3.

September 6: Critique of Grice. Relevance Theory.

Reading: Thomas, Ch. 4; D. Wilson and D. Sperber, "Relevance Theory"
<<http://www.dan.sperber.fr/?p=93>>.

Recommended: R. Carston, *Thoughts and Utterances*, pp. 94-152.

September 13: Two discoveries of Relevance Theory: “Explicature”; loosening and tightening. **Short paper due from everyone.**

Reading: R. Carston, “Relevance Theory and the Saying/Implicating Distinction”

<<https://www.ucl.ac.uk/pals/research/linguistics/publications/wpl/01papers/carston>>; R. Carston and A. Hall, “Implicature and Explicature”

<https://www.researchgate.net/publication/265483734_Implicature_and_Explicature>; K. Bach, “Conversational Implicature”

<<http://userwww.sfsu.edu/kbach/implicature.htm>>; R. Carston, “Enrichment and Loosening: Complementary Processes in Deriving the Proposition Expressed”

<<http://www.phon.ucl.ac.uk/publications/WPL/96papers/carston.pdf>>.

September 20: Sarcasm and irony.

Reading: D. Wilson and D. Sperber, “Explaining Irony”

<http://www.dan.sperber.fr/wp-content/uploads/WilsonSperber_ExplainingIrony.pdf>; E. Camp, “Sarcasm,

Pretense, and the Semantic/Pragmatics Distinction”

<<http://www.sas.upenn.edu/~campe/Papers/Camp.SarcProofs.pdf>>.

September 27: Politeness.

Reading: Brown and Levinson, Ch. 3; Thomas, Chs. 5 and 6.

Recommended: Brown and Levinson, Ch. 5; Lycan, “Conversation, Politeness, and Interruption.”

October 4: Politeness and morality.

Reading: K. Stohr, *On Manners*, Chs. 1 and 2.

Recommended: Stohr, Chs. 3-5.

October 11: Bad language.

Reading: K. Allan and K. Burridge, *Forbidden Words*, Chs. 1-3; online dictionary on “expletives” <<http://blog.dictionary.com/cussing-swearing-cursing>>; Quang, “English Sentences without Overt Grammatical Subjects”

<<http://lonniechu.com/QUANG.html>>.

Recommended: G. McCulloch, “A Linguist Explains the Syntax of ‘F---’”

<<http://the-toast.net/2014/12/09/linguist-explains-syntax-f-word/>>.

October 18: Slurs and other pejoratives. **Second short paper due.**

Reading: P. Saka, *How to Think about Meaning*, Ch. 5; L. Anderson and E. Lepore, “Slurring Words”

<<http://web.mit.edu/~shaslang/www/resch/AndersonSW.pdf>>; Lycan, "Slurs and Lexical Presumption"
 <http://wlycan.weebly.com/uploads/8/0/5/1/80513032/slurs_and_lexical_presumption_revised_april_2015.pdf>; R. DiFranco, "Do Racists Speak Truly? On the Truth-Conditional Content of Slurs"
 <<http://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/10.1002/tht3.154/epdf>>.

October 25: Language and gender.

Reading: R. Lakoff, *Language and Woman's Place* (2nd edn), Part I; R. Langton, "Speech Acts and Unspeakable Acts"
 <<http://web.mit.edu/langton/www/pubs/SpeechActs.pdf>>; M. Meyerhoff, "Doing and Saying: Some Words on Women's Silence"; J. Saul, *Feminism: Issues and Arguments*, Ch. 6.

November 1: Language, race, class and age.

Reading: R. Lakoff, *The Language War*, Ch. 7; A. Mooney and B. Evans, *Language, Society and Power: An Introduction*, Chs. 7-9.

November 8: Language and advertising.

Reading: J. Sedivy and G. Carlson, *Sold on Language*, Chs. 1-6.
Recommended: M.L. Geis, *The Language of Television Advertising*, Chs. 1-5. A. Mooney and B. Evans, *Language, Society and Power: An Introduction*, Ch. 4.

November 15: Language and politics. **Third short paper due.**

Reading: G. Orwell, "Politics and the English Language"
 <http://www.orwell.ru/library/essays/politics/english/e_polit/>; M.L. Geis, *The Language of Politics*, Chs. 1-4.

November 29: Propaganda.

Reading: J. Stanley, *How Propaganda Works*, Chs. 3 and 4.

December 6: Political renamings. **Final paper due from everyone.**

Reading: ?!.