

INTRODUCTION TO SEMANTICS: QUANTIFICATION

Course information

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This course is an introduction to formal semantics with a focus on quantification. It is designed to give you a taste for semantic analysis (within our very limiting time constraints!). It is **not** intended as an overview of the field and its current developments.

Schedule

	Content	Readings/group work
Session 1	Introduction to formal semantics: truth-conditions, compositionality	Work on Partee <i>et al.</i> (1990) (Chs. 1&2) if you didn't do so beforehand
Session 2	Quantification in predicate logic and in English	Group project: quantification in Norwegian
Session 3	Generalized quantifier theory	Group project: quantification in Norwegian
Session 4	Quantifier scope	Group project: quantification in Norwegian
Session 5	Indefinites	Group project: quantification in Norwegian

To do before the school. Read and do all of the exercises in chapters 1 and 2 of Partee *et al.* (1990) (there are solutions at the back of the book, but beware: there are lots of typos). The more you do before we meet, the more you will get out of the class (you could even get started on chapter 3!). You will not be able to get much out of the class if you do nothing beforehand.

To do during the school. In the evenings you will have the opportunity to participate in a group project about quantification in Norwegian.

To do after the school. Work your way through Heim and Kratzer (1998) and do all the exercises. This is a very challenging book and you should dedicate ample time and thought to it. Please bear in mind that answers to some of its exercises posted online are wrong. You can email me for advice.

When you are done with that, work your way through von Stechow and Heim (2011) lecture notes on intensional semantics, doing all of the exercises.

Readings and resources

Textbooks

- Heim, I., and A. Kratzer (1998) *Semantics in Generative Grammar*. Blackwell.
- Partee, B.H., A. ter Meulen, and R. E. Wall (1990) *Mathematical Methods in Linguistics*. Dordrecht: Kluwer. (a.k.a. “The Partee textbook”)

Review articles

- Partee, B.H. (1996) The development of formal semantics in linguistic theory. In *The Handbook of Contemporary Semantic Theory*, ed. Shalom Lappin, 11-38. Oxford: Blackwell Publishers.
- Partee, B. H. (2004) Reflections of a formal semanticist. In B. Partee *Compositionality in Formal Semantics: Selected Papers of Barbara Partee*. 1-25. Oxford: Blackwell Publishers.

Handbooks/books/other textbooks

- Chierchia, G., and S. McConnell-Ginet (1990/2000) (rev. 2nd ed.). *Meaning and Grammar. An Introduction to Semantics*, MIT Press.
- von Fintel, K. and I. Heim (2011) *Intensional semantics*, ms., <http://web.mit.edu/fintel/fintel-heim-intensional.pdf>
- L.T.F. Gamut, *Logic, Language and Meaning*, Chicago University Press (two volumes)
- Lappin, S. (1996) *The Handbook of Contemporary Semantic Theory*. Oxford: Blackwell.
- Keenan, E. and D. Paperno (eds.) (2012) *Handbook of quantifiers in natural language*, *Studies in Linguistics and Philosophy* 90, Springer
- Portner, P. (2005) *What is Meaning? Fundamentals of Formal Semantics*. Malden, MA: Blackwell.
- Portner, P. and B.H. Partee (2002) *Formal Semantics: The Essential Readings*. Oxford: Blackwell.
- de Swart, H. (1998) *Introduction to Natural Language Semantics*, CSLI.

Web resources

- www.semanticsarchive.net (papers on formal semantics and pragmatics)
- <http://vimeo.com/20664367> (Partee’s “Is this a good time for formal semantics?”)
- <http://plato.stanford.edu/> (Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy)
- <http://ocw.mit.edu/courses/linguistics-and-philosophy/24-973-advanced-semantics-spring-2009/> (Kai von Fintel’s course on Advanced Semantics)