Experimental Investigations of the Semantics/Pragmatics Interface

Course Outline and Preliminary Reading List

Lecture 1: Some Theoretical Background and Some Recent Developments.
The Gricean Programme and the Semantics/Pragmatics Distinction; Generalised Conversational Implicatures and Neo-Gricean Pragmatics; Post-Gricean Pragmatics - Local Implicatures; Grammaticisation of Implicatures?

Reading: Grice (1967/1989); Gazdar (1979); Horn (1989); Levinson (2000); Chierchia (2004); Recanati (2003); van Rooy & Schulz (2004); Chierchia et al (ms).

Lecture 2: Experimental Investigations into Pragmatic Theory I (Adults).
Testing 'strong defaultness'; On weak defaultness; Embedding Implicatures; The ‘cost’ of implicatures; Ambiguity or additive inference?

Reading: Noveck (2001); Bott & Noveck (2004); Breheny, Katsos & Williams (2006); Geurts & Pouscoulous (2008).

Lecture 3: Experimental Investigations into Pragmatic Theory II (Children)
Are kids really more logical than adults?; Effects of different methodological paradigms on generating scalar implicatures; What develops with age?

Reading: Guasti et al (2005); Pouscoulous et al (2007); Katsos (in press)

Lecture 4: The Development of Pragmatic Abilities.
Under- and over-informativeness; Perspective-taking, theory of mind and pragmatics; The acquisition of quantification;


Lecture 5: Beyond Implicatures
Experimental Investigations into Presuppositions; Pragmatics and Psycholinguistics (Questions of modularity - the role of context in language processing); Pragmatics and Neuroscience.
Reading: Altmann & Steedman (1988); van Berkum et al (2003); Chemla & Schlenker (2007); Schwarz (2008)

Suggested Reading (essential reading is underlined):


Chierchia, G., D. Fox & B. Spector (2008). The grammatical view of scalar implicatures and the relationship between semantics and pragmatics. ms


