



Introducing
Extensions

Frege's
Principle

A Farewell
to Psychol-
ogism

Extensions
for Words
and
Phrases

Truth
Values as
Extensions
of
Sentences

ESSLI Summerschool 2014: Intro to Compositional Semantics

Thomas Ede Zimmermann, Goethe-Universität Frankfurt
Wolfgang Sternefeld, Universität Tübingen

Second Lecture: Introducing Extensions



Our plan for this course:

- Monday: Tuning in: Structural Ambiguity (Wolfgang)
- **Tuesday: Introducing Extensions (Ede)**
- Wednesday: Composing Extensions (Wolfgang)
- Thursday: Quantifiers (Wolfgang and Ede)
- Friday: Propositions and Intensions (Ede)



Two arrangements of unambiguous words can different meanings:

- (1) a. Fritz kommt
 Fritz is-coming
 b. Kommt Fritz
 is-coming Fritz

Whereas the verb-second structure in (a) is normally interpreted as a declarative sentence, the verb-first structure in (b) is interpreted as a yes-no-question.



(2) *Frege's Principle of Compositionality*

The meaning of a composite expression is a function of the meaning of its immediate constituents and the way these constituents are put together.



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When learning a new word, we learn how to combine a certain pronunciation, its phonetics and phonology, with its meaning. Thereby, a previously meaningless sequence of sounds like *schmöll* becomes vivid, we associate with it the idea of someone who isn't thirsty any more. In this case, one might be tempted to say that the **meaning** of an expression is the idea or conception (*Vorstellung*) a speaker associates with its utterance.



Schreiben, die bleiben

Höhepunkte abendländischer Briefkultur,
ausgewählt von Kaplan Klappstuhl,
Folge 27.

An die Dudenredaktion, Abt. Neue Worte.

Betr. Anregung

Sehr geehrte Herren !

Mir ist aufgefallen, daß die deutsche Sprache ein Wort zu wenig hat. Wenn man nicht mehr " hungrig " ist, ist man "satt " . Was ist man jedoch, wenn man nicht mehr "durstig" ist ? Na ? Naa ? Na bitte ! Dann "hat man seinen Durst gestillt" oder "man ist nicht mehr durstig" und was dergleichen unschöne Satzbandwürmer mehr sind . Ein k n a p p e s einsilbiges Wort für besagten Zustand fehlt jedoch, ich würde vorschlagen, dafür die Bezeichnung " schmöll " einzuführen und in Ihre Lexika auf - zunehmen .

Mit vorzüglicher Hoachtung

Werner Schmöll



To the data editors of the *Duden* publishers, dept. new words

re: suggestion

Dear Sirs,

I have noticed that the German language lacks a word. If you are no longer hungry, you are full. But what are you if you are no longer thirsty? Eh? Then you have 'sated your thirst' or you are 'no longer thirsty' or some similarly inelegant circumlocution. But we have no short monosyllabic word for this condition. I would suggest that you introduce the term 'schmöll' and include it in your reference works.

Yours faithfully,
Werner Schmöll



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When learning a new word, we learn how to combine a certain pronunciation, its phonetics and phonology, with its meaning. Thereby, a previously meaningless sequence of sounds like *schmöll* becomes vivid, we associate with it the idea of someone who isn't thirsty any more. In this case, one might be tempted to say that the **meaning** of an expression is the idea or conception (*Vorstellung*) a speaker associates with its utterance.



(Fregean and Wittgensteinian) ...



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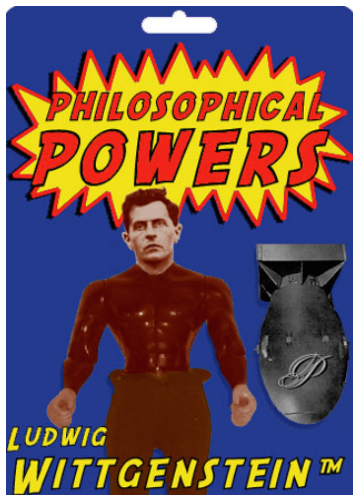
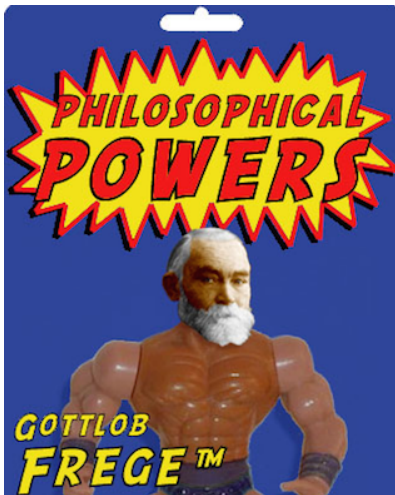
(Fregean and Wittgensteinian) ...



(oops)



... objections ...





... against such a **“psychologistic”** notion of meaning:

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... against such a “**psychologistic**” notion of meaning:

- **Subjectiveness:** Different speakers may associate different things with a single word at different occasions: such “meanings,” however, cannot be objective, but will rather be influenced by personal experience, and one might wonder how these “subjective meanings” serve communication between different subjects.



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- **Limited Coverage:** We can have mental images of nouns like *horse* or *table*, but what on earth could be associated with words like *and*, *most*, *only*, *then*, *of*, *if*, ... ?



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- **Irrelevance:** Due to different personal experiences, speakers can have all sorts of associations without this having any influence on the meaning of an expression.



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- **Limited Coverage:** We can have mental images of nouns like *horse* or *table*, but what on earth could be associated with words like *and*, *most*, *only*, *then*, *of*, *if*, . . . ?
- **Irrelevance:** Due to different personal experiences, speakers can have all sorts of associations without this having any influence on the meaning of an expression.
- **Privacy:** The associations of an individual person are in principle inaccessible to other speakers. So, again, how can they be used for interpersonal communication?



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On the other hand ...

MEANING SERVES COMMUNICATION ... and so:



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On the other hand ...

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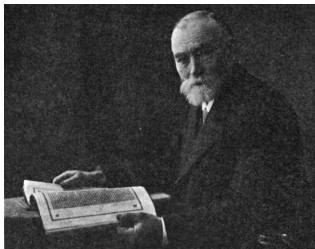
MEANINGS ought to be identified with

COMMUNICATIVE FUNCTIONS of expressions

... as in the tradition of ...



LOGICAL SEMANTICS



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... or (more recently)

FORMAL SEMANTICS





LOGICAL [or FORMAL] SEMANTICS

Meanings \approx (certain) **communicative functions** of expressions, viz.:

- **Content:** *Which information* is expressed ...
- **Reference:** ... and *what* this information is *about*



LOGICAL [or FORMAL] SEMANTICS

The **meaning** of any expressions has (at least) **two components**, viz. its:

- **intension** \approx its contribution to the content of expressions in which it occurs
- **extension**: \approx its contribution to the reference of expressions in which it occurs

In the simplest cases:

- Intension is content.
- Extension is reference.

We will start with the latter ...



Some examples:

- (3) — Tübingen, Prof. Arnim v. Stechow (**proper names**)
- the president of the US (**definite descriptions**)
- table, horse, book (**nouns**)
- bald, red, stupid (**adjectives**)
- nobody, nothing, no dog (**negative quantifiers**)



Some examples:

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- What do these expressions refer to?



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- What do these expressions refer to?
- What is their contribution to reference?



[What do these expressions refer to?]

Referential expressions like

- proper names (like *Stuttgart*, *Edward Snowden*, ...)
- definite descriptions (like *the capital of Baden-Württemberg*, *the whistle blower...*)
- (some) personal pronouns (like *she*)
- ...

(are used to) refer to persons, places, or other **individuals**.



[What do these expressions refer to?]

Referential expressions like

- proper names (like *Stuttgart*, *Edward Snowden*, ...)
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(are used to) refer to persons, places, or other **individuals**.

The referent of a referential expression also forms its **extension**.



[What do these expressions refer to?]

- **common (count) nouns** like *table, car, ...*

as well as some ('intersective')

- **adjectives** like *blond, rectangular, ...*

do not refer to single individuals but show **multiple** reference.



[What do these expressions refer to?]

- **common (count) nouns** like *table, car, ...*

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do not refer to single individuals but show **multiple** reference.

The set of all its referents forms the **extension** of such a multiply extensional expression.



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NB1: The extension of

- *current German chancellor*

is the set of all current German chancellors – i.e., a set with one member.



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However, the extension of

- ***the current German chancellor***

is the current German chancellor, i.e., a person.



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SO:

- *current German chancellor* (whose extension is { *A.M.* }),

and:

- *the current German chancellor*

do not have the same extension¹!

¹on standard set-theoretic assumptions



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NB2: The extension of

- *current French king*

is the set of all current French kings – i.e., the empty set.



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However, the extension of

- ***the current king of France***

would have to be the current French king
... but there is no such (existing) person!



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SO: unlike

- *current king of France* (whose extension is \emptyset),
- *the current king of France*

appears to have no extension.



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SO: unlike

- *current king of France* (whose extension is \emptyset),
- *the current king of France*

appears to have no extension. We will henceforth ignore such **void** descriptions. (Read chapter 9 for more on this ...)



Not alle nouns are count nouns — some are:

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Not alle nouns are count nouns — some are:

- *mass nouns*: **milk, information,...**
Hallmark: no plural (without meaning shift)

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- *mass nouns*: **milk, information,...**
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- *relational nouns*: **brother, copy,...**
Hallmark: possessives receive “special” meaning



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- *mass nouns*: **milk, information**,...
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- *functional nouns*: **father, surface**,...
Hallmark: relational plus inherent uniqueness



Not alle nouns are count nouns — some are:

- *mass nouns*: **milk, information**,...
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- *functional nouns*: **father, surface**,...
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Mass nouns will be ignored in the following.



The extensions of relational and functional nouns can be identified with sets of **(ordered pairs)** of individuals.

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The extensions of relational and functional nouns can be identified with sets of **(ordered pairs)** of individuals.

Relational examples:

(4)

brother:

{ ⟨Ethan, Joel⟩, ⟨Joel, Ethan⟩, ⟨Deborah, Joel⟩, ⟨Deborah, Ethan⟩, ... }

arm:

{ ⟨Ludwig, Ludwig's right arm⟩, ⟨Ludwig, Ludwig's left arm⟩, ⟨Paul, Paul's left arm⟩, ... }

idea:

{ ⟨Albert, $E = mc^2$ ⟩, ⟨René, *COGITO*⟩, ⟨Bertie, $R \in R \Leftrightarrow R \notin R$ ⟩, ... }



Functional examples:

(5)

birthplace:

{ ⟨Adam, Paradise⟩, ⟨Eve, Paradise⟩, ⟨John, Liverpool⟩, ⟨Yoko, Tokyo⟩, ... }

mother:

{ ⟨Cain, Eve⟩, ⟨Abel, Eve⟩, ⟨Stella, Linda⟩, ⟨Sean, Yoko⟩, ... }

surface:

{ ⟨Mars, Mars's surface⟩, ⟨Earth, Earth's surface⟩, ... }



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In addition to being relational, the extensions f of functional nouns in (5) are **functions**, i.e., they satisfy a **uniqueness** condition:

(6) If both $\langle a, v_1 \rangle \in f$ and $\langle a, v_2 \rangle \in f$, then $v_1 = v_2$.



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The **extension** of a functional noun is a **function mapping** individuals to individuals.



Taking stock:

The extension of a **referential expression** — a name, a (non-void) definite description, a (referential) pronoun, etc. — is an **individual**, viz. its referent.

The extension of a **relational noun** is a **binary relation** among [= set of ordered pairs of] individuals.

The extension of a **functional noun** is a **function** mapping individuals to individuals.



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Extensions of verbs and verb phrases

(7)

sleep: the set of sleepers

kiss: a relation between kissers and kissees, i.e., the set of pairs $\langle x, y \rangle$ such that x kisses y

donate: a **three-place relation**, a set of triples



(8)

| type of expression | type of extension | example | extension |
|-------------------------------------|-------------------------------|---------------|--|
| intransitive verb | set of individuals | <i>sleep</i> | the set of sleepers |
| transitive verb transitive verb | set of pairs of individuals | <i>eat</i> | the set of pairs (eater, eaten) |
| ditransitive verb ditransitive verb | set of triples of individuals | <i>donate</i> | the set of triples (donator, recipient, donation) |



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- (9) *Parallelism between valency and type of extension:*
The extension of an n -place verb is always a set of n -tuples.



(10) *The Pope shows the President the Vatican Palace*

(11)

| verb or verb phrase | valency | extension |
|---|---------|---|
| <i>shows</i> | 3 | the triples $\langle a, b, c \rangle$ where <i>a</i> shows <i>b</i> to <i>c</i> |
| <i>shows</i> <i>the President</i> | 2 | the pairs $\langle a, b \rangle$ where <i>a</i> shows <i>b</i> to the President |
| <i>shows</i> <i>the President</i> <i>the Vatican Palace</i> | 1 | the 1-tuples $\langle a \rangle$ where <i>a</i> shows the Vatican Palace to the President |



(10) *The Pope shows the President the Vatican Palace*

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(12)

| sentence | valency | extension |
|--|---------|---|
| <i>The Pope shows the President the Vatican Palace</i> | 0 | the 0-tuples $\langle \rangle$ where the Pope shows the Vatican Palace to the president |



(13)

| sentence | valency | extension |
|--|---------|--|
| <i>The Pope shows the President the Vatican Palace</i> | 0 | the 0-tuples $\langle \rangle$ where the Pope shows the Vatican Palace to the president |

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(13)

| sentence | valency | extension |
|--|---------|--|
| <i>The Pope shows the President the Vatican Palace</i> | 0 | the 0-tuples $\langle \rangle$ where the Pope shows the Vatican Palace to the president |

Standard Assumption 1

There is precisely one zero-tuple, viz., the empty set \emptyset .



(13)

| sentence | valency | extension |
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| <i>The Pope shows the President the Vatican Palace</i> | 0 | the 0-tuples $\langle \rangle$ where the Pope shows the Vatican Palace to the president |

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There is precisely one zero-tuple, viz., the empty set \emptyset .

Two cases:

- IF the Pope does NOT show the Vatican Palace to the president, then NO zero-tuple satisfies the condition that the Pope shows the Vatican Palace to the president



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Two cases:

- IF the Pope does NOT show the Vatican Palace to the president, then NO zero-tuple satisfies the condition that the Pope shows the Vatican Palace to the president and so the extension in (13) is empty



(13)

| sentence | valency | extension |
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Two cases:

- IF the Pope does NOT show the Vatican Palace to the president, then NO zero-tuple satisfies the condition that the Pope shows the Vatican Palace to the president and so the extension in (13) is empty, i.e.: \emptyset .
- IF the Pope DOES show the Vatican Palace to the president, then ANY zero-tuple satisfies the condition that the Pope shows the Vatican Palace to the president



(13)

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(13)

| sentence | valency | extension |
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There is precisely one zero-tuple, viz., the empty set \emptyset .

Two cases:

- IF the Pope does NOT show the Vatican Palace to the president, then NO zero-tuple satisfies the condition that the Pope shows the Vatican Palace to the president and so the extension in (13) is empty, i.e.: \emptyset .
- IF the Pope DOES show the Vatican Palace to the president, then ANY zero-tuple satisfies the condition that the Pope shows the Vatican Palace to the president and so the extension in (13) is the set of all 0-tuples, i.e.: $\{\emptyset\}$.



Two cases:

- If the Pope does not show the Vatican Palace to the president, then the extension in (13) is: \emptyset .
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(Wildly) generalizing:

- If a (declarative) sentence is false, its extension is: \emptyset .
- If a (declarative) sentence is true, its extension is: $\{\emptyset\}$.



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Standard Assumption 2

$$\emptyset = 0, \{\emptyset\} = 1.$$



(Wildly) generalizing:

- If a (declarative) sentence is false, its extension is: \emptyset .
- If a (declarative) sentence is true, its extension is: $\{\emptyset\}$.

Standard Assumption 2

$$\emptyset = 0, \{\emptyset\} = 1.$$

(14) *Frege's Generalization*

The extension of a sentence S is its truth value, i.e., 1 if S is true and 0 if S is false.