

SEMANTIC theories of meaning say (i) what meanings are and (ii) the rules that govern them.

Directed at (i): Reference Theory, Idea Theory, Sense/Reference Theory, Verificationism, Proposition Theory.

Directed at (ii): theory of descriptions (Russell), truth-conditional semantics (Davidson), intensional semantics,....

FOUNDATIONAL theories of meaning say how meanings arise in the first place.

Psychological Theory (Grice), Social Convention Theory (Lewis), Covariation Theory, Teleological Theory,...

Natural vs non-natural meaning. "Those spots mean measles" vs "The bell means you should return to your seats."

Take x here to be an utterance or type of utterance, say the type where someone utters a certain sentence.

1st stab: Causal-Tendency Theory

x means_{NN} that p if and only if x has a tendency to cause and be caused by the belief that p

He gives two arguments against this: (i) the example of putting on one's tailcoat, and (ii) 'Jones is an athlete' and 'Jones is tall.'

His second attempt focuses, not on the causes and effects of an utterance, but rather its intended effects.

2nd stab: Intention Theory

x means_{NN} that p if and only if x was done with the intention of causing the belief that p.

Herod presents Salome with the severed head of St John the Baptist. A child lets its mother see how pale it is. I leave the china my daughter has broken around for my wife to see. (Brain surgery.)

3rd stab: Self-Referential Intention Theory

"S meant_{NN} something by x" is (roughly) equivalent to

"S intended the utterance of x to produce some effect in an audience by means of the recognition of this intention."

S means p by x if and only if:

- (1) S intends that H (the hearer) believe that p.
- (2) S intends that H recognizes S's intention (1)
- (3) S intends that H believes that p *because* she recognizes intention (1)

Is this sufficient?

(a) Humpty-Dumpty objection

Can Humpty-Dumpty mean 'there's a knockdown argument for you' by uttering 'there's glory for you'?

(b) American soldier in Italy (Searle)

The captured American utters the only German sentence he knows, a line from a Goethe poem.

Is it necessary?

(a) No audience, (b) Examinee, (c) Conclusion of an argument.

The program is to

- i. Explain **linguistic meaning** in terms of **speaker's meaning**
- ii. Explain **speaker's meaning** in terms of **communicative intentions**.

Suppose he's nailed ii. What about i.? The simplest idea would be:

Sentence A means that p iff speakers have a policy or habit of uttering A to speaker-mean that p.

But...sentences never uttered, or whose standard use is ironic or sarcastic or hyperbolic, or mainly used in indirect speech. ("I can believe that" means you have a certain doxastic ability, but that's not what we mean by it.)

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24.251 Introduction to Philosophy of Language
Fall 2011

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