

Introduction to Semantics

Course type: Introductory

Instructors: Elena Castroviejo (elena.castroviejo@cchs.csic.es) and Berit Gehrke (erdbeerita@gmail.com)

Description:

This course is an introduction to natural language semantics and pragmatics, including the basic issues and data that have traditionally been the focus of study in formal approaches, the most influential theoretical frameworks, and the most commonly used research methodologies.

Topics:

1. Introduction, organisational issues; What is meaning? The roles of content and context in meaning, Semantics vs. Pragmatics vs. other modules in grammar, basic notions in semantics and pragmatics
2. Word meaning and sentence meaning, Compositionality
3. Predicates, Modification
4. Reference and Quantifiers
5. Binding and Anaphora
6. Speech Acts
7. Conversational Implicature
8. Presuppositions, Conventional Implicature
9. Questions in intensional semantics
10. General discussion, outlook

Optional preparatory references:

- Chierchia, G. & S. McConnell Ginet (1990). *Meaning and Grammar*. Cambridge, MA: MIT Press.
- Geurts, B. (2011) *Quantity Implicatures*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Heim, I. & A. Kratzer (1998). *Semantics in Generative Grammar*. Oxford: Blackwell.
- Horn, L.R. & G.L. Ward (eds) (2004). *The Handbook of Pragmatics*. Oxford: Wiley-Blackwell.
- Kearns, Kate. (2010). *Semantics* (2nd Edition). Palgrave Macmillan.
- Kadmon, N. (2001). *Formal Pragmatics: Semantics, Pragmatics, Presupposition, and Focus*. Oxford: Blackwell.
- Partee, B., A. ter Meulen, & R. Wall (1990). *Mathematical Methods in Linguistics*. Dordrecht: Kluwer.
- Portner, P. (2005). *What is Meaning? Fundamentals of Formal Semantics*. Oxford: Blackwell.
- de Swart, H. (1998). *Introduction to Natural Language Semantics*. Stanford: CSLI Publications.