Assignment 6
Chris Potts, Ling 230b: Advanced semantics and pragmatics, Spring 2012
Distributed May 15; due May 22

1 Working with the Szabó fragment [2 points]

Szabó (2010) provides a full fragment that embodies his analysis of specific–opaque readings. His presentation is terse, though, and he does not illustrate how the fragment captures specific–opaque readings. Provide such an illustration. For this, imagine that you’ve been assigned to extend his paper with a one-page appendix containing the missing example and analysis.

2 Embedding interrogatives [2 points]

First, formulate a meaning for decide as used in (1). (You might want to start with a meaning for decide in declarative sentences like Lisa decided that Bart won and then use that meaning in your interrogative version, as we did for know, but this is not required.)

(1) a. Lisa decided whether Bart passed.
   b. Lisa decided who passed.

Second, consider how your proposed lexical meaning interacts with the interrogative denotations proposed by Hamblin (1976), Karttunen (1977), and Groenendijk and Stokhof (1984), as reviewed on the May 8 handout. Which theory provides the most natural and empirically accurate pairing with your \( \| \text{decide} \|_M \), and why?

3 Negation and focus sensitivity [2 points]

Using the theory of focus developed on the May 17 handout, provide (i) the focus value for (2) using the model provided in (3); and an explanation for why (2) tends to convey that someone other than Bart passed. (Your explanation will likely involve pragmatic reasoning about alternatives. We did not fully cover this in class; you’ll need to get creative.)

(2) \( \text{BART}_F \) didn’t pass.

(3) \( [\text{Lisa}]^o = \) ![Diagram]

\( [\text{tease}]^o = \{ (x, y) | x \text{ teases } y \} \)
4 Final project: first summaries [4 points]

Your final project will center around summaries of (at least) eight papers in the sub-area you chose. Your interim task:

- For assignment 5, problem 3, you identified the research questions that are at the heart of your sub-area. Repeat those, updating them if necessary.

- Provide draft summaries for at least three of your papers. For each one, provide a few sentences indicating how it connects with the major questions of your sub-area. This could be like “It addresses questions 2 and 3 by proposing . . .”.

- (Assignment 7 will ask for draft summaries of the remaining papers.)

References


