

# Assignment 7

Chris Potts, Ling 130a/230a: Introduction to semantics and pragmatics, Winter 2025

Distributed Mar 4; due Mar 11

## Final project task

[10 points]

**This problem is required only for people doing a final project, and it is the only problem that people doing final projects need to do. Everyone else should answer questions 1–3 below.**

The goal of this question is get you as close as possible to a complete rough draft that your project mentor can provide feedback on. The specific requirements are meant to accommodate the fact that you might not yet be in a position to produce a truly complete rough draft:

- i. A preliminary title is required. If you like, you can give a few different options with some commentary about their strengths and weaknesses, and your mentor will provide feedback.
- ii. You should include your full introduction from Assignment 6, updated based on the feedback you received.
- iii. From here, you need to map out your current view of the rest of the paper: all the sections and subsections with their titles. Ideally, you will actually draft all of this prose – messy, non-final prose is fine if it helps your reader see what you are aiming to say. If you don't feel ready to write the actual prose, you should resort to organized bulleted lists of things you need to convey, claims you need to make, and gaps you need to fill in, etc. We will read these as establishing the framework for your paper, and we will assume that you'll turn it all into actual paper prose later.
- iv. For projects that aren't traditional papers:
  - If you're planning an experiment, include draft instructions for participants and drafts of the crucial experimental items. We need to see these in detail at this stage, since so much of your project will depend on getting them right.
  - If you're creating a corpus, include the examples you've collected so far. If you haven't collected data by this time, then you probably need to refocus your project so that it doesn't depend on corpus examples – please discuss this with your project mentor.
  - If you're implementing a model, include your code so far, and make sure your draft includes lots of specific details about what the code does and what you still have planned in terms of improvements and extensions.
- v. The draft should include a proper bibliography. The entries should appear alphabetically and give at least full author name(s), year of publication, title, and outlet if applicable (e.g., journal name or proceedings name). Beyond that, we are not picky about the format. Electronic references are fine but need to include the above information in addition to the link.

Prose from your previous project assignments can be reused freely. We're hoping that all of this is building cohesively to the final submission!

## 1 What kind of meaning is this?

[2 points]

The handout ‘Diagnosing different kinds of meaning’ provides a flow-chart for classifying meanings as variously at-issue, conventionally implicated, presupposed, or conversationally implicated. Use that framework to classify meaning *p* as expressed in (A).

(A) Carol ate almost all the pizza.

*p* = Carol did not eat all the pizza.

Section 3 of the handout provides model answers. Your own answer could adopt the same format, and we’re looking for a similar level of explanation about the relevant examples.

## 2 Revisiting the Bustamante case

[4 points]

In *Speaking of Crime*, chapter 3, Solan and Tiersma discuss the Bustamante case. Your task: using the theory of speech acts described in the ‘Speech acts’ handout, and the facts of the legal situation as Solan and Tiersma describe it, provide one argument in favor of the position that Alcala “freely and voluntarily” consented to a search and one argument against that position. We expect each argument to be about 5–7 sentences long, and the best arguments will refer directly to speech act theory and to the facts of the case.

## 3 Illocutionary effects

[4 points]

In *Speaking of Crime*, chapter 4, Solan and Tiersma observe that people in police custody often perform the speech act of invoking their right to counsel very indirectly, with utterances like “Maybe I need a lawyer”. Your task: using the properties of illocutionary force given in section 4.2 of the ‘Speech acts’ handout, give two reasons *why* people in custody might behave in this way. (There are a number of sensible reasons that connect with the illocutionary force properties. You can just pick two. We expect each reason to take 3–5 sentences to describe.)