

Non-redundancy, social meaning, and role language

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Social meaning

- (1) A: Robin brought a **pie** [pa:]
B: Nice — oh btw I didn't know you were from the South!
A: Haha yep, I'm from Peachtree City, Georgia
B: What kind of pie?

Social meaning

- (2) A: Robin brought a **pie** [pa:]
B: Nice — oh btw I didn't know you were from the South!
A: Haha yep, I'm from Peachtree City, Georgia
B: What kind of pie?
A: Key **lime** [la:m]. Oh **Riley** [ra:li] brought a cherry **pie** [pa:] too

Social meaning

- (3) A: Robin brought a **pie** [pa:]
B: Nice — oh btw I didn't know you were from the South!
A: Haha yep, I'm from Peachtree City, Georgia
B: What kind of pie?
A: Key **lime** [la:m]. Oh **Riley** [ra:li] brought a cherry **pie** [pa:] too
B: # I get it, you're southern! 🙄



(Non-)redundancy

- (4) A: Robin, **who is a friend of mine**, brought a pie
B: Nice — didn't know you brought a friend
A: Haha yep, I know her from school
B: What kind of pie?

(Non-)redundancy

- (5) A: Robin, **who is a friend of mine**, brought a pie
B: Nice — didn't know you brought a friend
A: Haha yep, I know her from school
B: What kind of pie?
A: Key lime. Oh Riley brought key lime too. Robin, **who is a friend of mine**, isn't going to be too happy about that

(Non-)redundancy

- (6) A: Robin, **who is a friend of mine**, brought a pie
B: Nice — didn't know you brought a friend
A: Haha yep, I know her from school
B: What kind of pie?
A: Key lime. Oh Riley brought key lime too. Robin, **who is a friend of mine**, isn't going to be too happy about that
B: I get it, Robin is your friend! 🙄

(Non-)redundancy

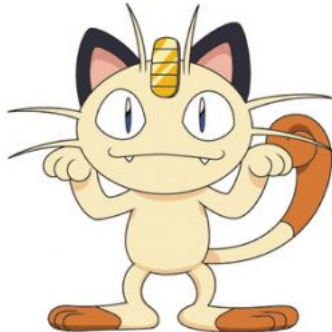
She brought a pie [pa:]

≠

She brought a pie — btw I'm from the South

➡ You're not really “informing them” every time that you're a southerner





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Role language

- (7) [Meowth, to James:] We're all sorry to see your face. Stay focused! We're here to capture rare and unusual Pokémon. Don't forget.

Role language

- (8) 🐱 : misetsukeruno-wa kekkoo-**nya**-ga, **nyaa**-tachi-no
show.off-TOP fine-NYA-but me.NYA-PL-GEN
mokuteki-wa mezurashii pokemon... sore-o
objective-TOP rare Pokemon that-ACC
wasureru-**nya**!
forget-NEG.NYA
'Showing off is fine, but our objective is (to catch) rare
Pokémon... don't forget that!'

Me: # I get it, you're a cat! 🙄



My questions

1. Does social meaning have a place in formal semantics?
2. What makes social meaning special compared to other kinds of non-truth-conditional meaning?
3. What even is role language?
4. What does this tell us about why we say stuff?

My (short) answers

1. Does social meaning have a place in formal semantics?
➡ Yes.
2. What makes social meaning special compared to other kinds of non-truth-conditional meaning?
➡ It has a lot of dependency on the *hearer* (social meaning is how others see you)
3. What even is role language?
➡ A type of social meaning
4. What does this tell us about why we say stuff?
➡ 1. To figure out what kind of world we live in; 2. To construct your identity



Special acknowledgement

- ▶ LING4009 - Formal Approaches to Social Meaning
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1. Secondary entailments
2. Social meaning as a secondary entailment
3. Analysis
4. Role language
5. Conclusion

Outline

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Primary entailment

- (9) a. Ai is from Michigan
 b. It is not the case that Ai is from Michigan

Secondary entailments

- (10) a. Ai's fiancé is from Michigan
b. It is not the case that **Ai's fiancé** is from Michigan
 ➡ 'Ai has a fiancé'

- ▶ Entailment that is not at-issue
- ▶ Further subtypes based on...
 1. Whether the falsity of this secondary entailment **affects the truth of the primary entailment** or not
 2. Whether this secondary entailment concerns what must be the case BEFORE you say this sentence (= prerequisite) , or AFTER you say this sentence (= update)

Secondary entailments - presupposition

- (11) a. Ai's fiancé is from Michigan
b. It is not the case that **Ai's fiancé** is from Michigan
 ➡ Presupp: '**Ai has a fiancé**'

1. YES affects primary entailment: if the presupposition is false, the at-issue content has no truth value
2. Prerequisite

Secondary entailments - supplements (conventional implicature)

- (12) a. Ai, who is from Michigan, currently lives in Ottawa
b. It is not the case that Ai, **who is from Michigan**, **currently**
lives in Ottawa
- ➡ CI: '**Ai is from Michigan**'

1. NO does not affect primary entailment
2. Update

(AnderBois et al. 2010; Potts 2005)

Secondary entailments - epithets (conventional implicature)

- (13) a. That bastard Gary lives in Ottawa
b. It is not the case that **that** **bastard** Gary lives in Ottawa
 ➡ CI: '**I** **hate** Gary'

1. NO does not affect primary entailment
2. Prerequisite

(Potts 2005; 2007)

Re: (non-)redundancy

★ #2 explains (non-)redundancy

► **UPDATE** \leadsto **Redundant**:

(14) # Ai is from Georgia. Ai is from Georgia.
(**primary entailment**)

(15) # Ai, who is from Georgia, visited Anna in Germany.
Anna was happy to see Ai, who is from Georgia.
(**CI - supplemental**)

► **PREREQUISITE** \leadsto **Not redundant**:

(16) Ai's fiancé visited Stefan in Germany. They went out to eat. Ai's fiancé paid.
(**presupposition**)

(17) That bastard Gary visited Anna in Germany. Anna yelled at him and told him to go home. The bastard deserved it.
(**CI - epithet**)

Normal cat: Meow
Texan Cat: Meowdy



Source: <https://me.me/i/normal-cat-meow-texan-cat-meowdy-none-195677000af043f7a29c01a5468f02ec>

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Social meaning

It *is* a secondary entailment

(Smith et al. 2010)

(18) a. Robin brought a pie [pa:]

b. It is not the case that Robin brought a **pie** [pa:]

➡ SM: 'I'm from
the South'

(19) Riley [ɹa:li] brought a pie [pa:]

(not redundant)

1. NO does not affect primary entailment

(Smith et al. 2010)

2. Prerequisite



Social meaning

It *is* a secondary entailment (Smith et al. 2010)

(20) a. Robin brought a pie [pa:]

b. It is not the case that Robin brought a **pie** [pa:]

➡ SM: 'I'm from
the South'

(21) Riley [ɹa:li] brought a pie [pa:]

(not redundant)

1. NO does not affect primary entailment

(Smith et al. 2010)

2. Prerequisite

↪ **bastard-like**



Is social meaning just a kind of CI then?
(cf., Burnett 2019; Smith et al. 2010; Levinson 1979)

Is social meaning just a kind of CI then?
(cf., Burnett 2019; Smith et al. 2010; Levinson 1979)



Speaker vs. hearer orientation

(22) That bastard Gary ‘I hate Gary’

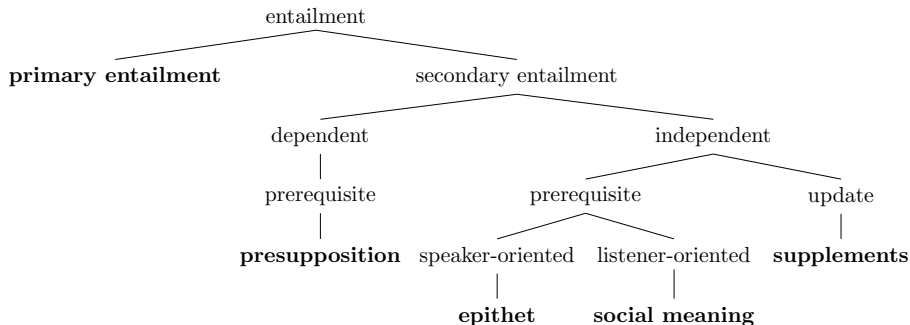
(23) Pie [pa:] ‘I’m from the South, I’m nice, I’m unintelligent ...’
(cf., Allbritten 2011)

➡ Social meaning is *field* of meanings (**indexical field**)
(Eckert 2008)

1. **Epithet**: successful conveyal of ★ depends on **speaker**
2. **SM**: successful conveyal of ★ depends on **hearer**
 - ➡ What the hearer thinks of you in the first place affects what the variable means (cf., Podesva et al. 2015; among others)
3. **Primary entailment, presupposition, and supplements**: successful conveyal depends on **world facts**

(Burnett 2019)

Typology of meanings



Summary of properties of social meaning

Puzzles of social meaning:

1. Non-at-issue (secondary entailment)
2. Not redundant when repeated
3. A “field” of meanings
4. Interpretation depends on what the hearer thinks of you in the first place

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Why even connect this to formal semantics/pragmatics?

Primary entailments, presuppositions, supplements:

- ➡ Help answer the question “what kind of world do we live in?”
- ➡ Concern the **Common Ground** (CG) and the **Context Set** (CS) in discourse (Stalnaker 1978)
- ➡ The more propositions you have in the CG, the smaller the CS gets
- ➡ Assertions are about how the discourse **context** is affected wrt these parts

Why even connect this to formal semantics/pragmatics?

Social meaning:

- ➔ Helps answer the question “who am I to other people in this world?”
- ➔ Has a counterpart that is like the CS: “The set of all possible personas”
- ➔ The more socially indexing items you use, the more we know which of these personas belong to you
- ➔ You are also doing something to the discourse context with social meaning



Social meaning: analysis

(24) *The indexical field of [a:]*:

$$\begin{aligned}\mathcal{F}_{a:} &= \lambda f_{\langle e, st \rangle} [R(f, \llbracket \text{southern} \rrbracket)] \\ &= \text{‘the set of all properties related to } \llbracket \text{southern} \rrbracket \text{’} \\ &= \left\{ \begin{array}{l} \lambda x \lambda w. \text{southern}_w(x), \lambda x \lambda w. \neg \text{intelligent}_w(x), \\ \lambda x \lambda w. \text{nice}_w(x) \dots \end{array} \right\}\end{aligned}$$

Social meaning: analysis

(25) *The indexical set:*

$$\mathcal{I} = \lambda f_{\langle e, st \rangle} [\exists w \in W_{\text{ADDR}}^{\text{EPI}} [f(\text{SPKR})(w)]]$$

= ‘The set of all properties that the speaker has in at least one world compatible with the addressee’s knowledge’

= ‘The set of properties that the speaker could have, according to the addressee’

$$= \left\{ \begin{array}{l} \lambda x \lambda w. \mathbf{southern}_w(x), \lambda x \lambda w. \mathbf{intelligent}_w(x), \\ \lambda x \lambda w. \mathbf{nice}_w(x), \lambda x \lambda w. \neg \mathbf{nice}_w(x), \lambda x \lambda w. \mathbf{feminine}_w(x) \end{array} \right\}$$



Social meaning: analysis

$$(26) \quad \mathcal{F}_{a:} = \left\{ \begin{array}{l} \lambda x \lambda w. \mathbf{southern}_w(x), \lambda x \lambda w. \neg \mathbf{intelligent}_w(x), \\ \lambda x \lambda w. \mathbf{nice}_w(x) \dots \end{array} \right\}$$

$$(27) \quad \mathcal{I} = \left\{ \begin{array}{l} \lambda x \lambda w. \mathbf{southern}_w(x), \lambda x \lambda w. \mathbf{intelligent}_w(x), \\ \lambda x \lambda w. \mathbf{nice}_w(x), \lambda x \lambda w. \neg \mathbf{nice}_w(x), \lambda x \lambda w. \mathbf{feminine}_w(x) \end{array} \right\}$$

$$(28) \quad \mathcal{F}_{a:} \cap \mathcal{I} = \{ \lambda x \lambda w. \mathbf{southern}_w(x), \lambda x \lambda w. \mathbf{nice}_w(x) \}$$

➡ What $[a:]$ means depends on what the hearer thinks about you in the first place

Social meaning: multidimensional and dynamic semantics

- ▶ Re: this idea that sentential meaning can be framed in terms of what you're doing to the context
- ▶ **Context change potential (CCP)** (cf., Heim 1982)
 - ➡ relation between input context (C) and output context (C')

(29) $\llbracket \text{pa:} \rrbracket$

a. $= \lambda x \lambda w [\text{pie}_w(x)]$ (at-issue meaning)

b. $= \lambda C \lambda C' [(\mathcal{F}_{\text{a:}} \cap \mathcal{I}) \subseteq \mathcal{P}_{\text{SPKR}}^C]$ (social meaning)

➡ the use condition
of $\llbracket \text{pa:} \rrbracket$

(cf., Gutzmann 2013)

Social meaning: multidimensional and dynamic semantics

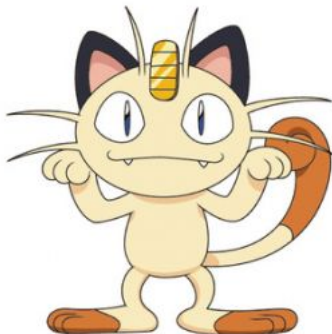
$$(30) \quad \lambda C \lambda C' \left[(\mathcal{F}_{a:} \cap \mathcal{I}) \subseteq \mathcal{P}_{\text{SPKR}}^C \right]$$

(31) $\mathcal{P}_{\text{SPKR}}$ = the set of the speaker's perceived personas (the union of all the speaker's $\mathcal{F} \cap \mathcal{I}$'s in the discourse)

=

$$\left\{ \begin{array}{l} \lambda x \lambda w. \text{southern}_w(x), \lambda x \lambda w. \text{nice}_w(x), \lambda x \lambda w. \text{intelligent}_w(x), \\ \lambda x \lambda w. \text{feminine}_w(x), \lambda x \lambda w. \text{young}_w(x) \dots \end{array} \right\}$$

- ➡ What (30) says: ‘ $\{ \lambda x \lambda w. \text{southern}_w(x), \lambda x \lambda w. \text{nice}_w(x) \}$ better be a subset of ★ before you say [pa:]’
- ➡ = ‘You better have established (linguistically or otherwise) that you have this persona if you’re going to speak this way’



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Extending to role language

- (32) doko mitemo pikachuu darake -da -**nya**
where look Pikachu everywhere -COP -NYA
'There's Pikachu everywhere, no matter where you look!'

- ▶ **Role language** (*yakuwarigo*) - expressions that depict the speaker's "character type" (Kinsui 2003; Teshigawara and Kinsui 2011)

Not just cats

- (33) a. sooja
 that's.right.OLD
 'That's right (I'm speaking like an old wise man)'
- b. sooda -chuu
 that's.right -CHUU
 'That's right (I'm speaking like a mouse)'
- c. sooda -pyon
 that's.right -PYON
 'That's right (I'm speaking like a rabbit)'

Similar example

(34) You have jussst made a ssssseriousss missstake!

Not just cats

- (35) a. sooda -robo
 that's.right -ROBO
 'That's right (I'm speaking like a robot)'
- b. sooda -goro
 that's.right -GORO
 'That's right (I'm speaking like a rolling rock)'
- c. sooda -pumo
 that's.right -PUMO
 'That's right (I'm speaking like a ???)'
- d. sooda -ccha!
 that's.right -CHA
 'That's right! (I'm speaking cute?)'

Some comments

- ▶ Largely seen in fiction (e.g., no actual old person says *sooja*)
- ▶ But people do use role language irl (e.g., role play, etc.) and have judgments about them
- ▶ Some scholars (Teshigawara and Kinsui 2011) say it's really not the same thing as sociolinguistic variation

Extending the analysis

- (36) sooda -nya
 that's.right -NYA
 'That's right (I'm speaking like a cat)'

➡ 'Make sure you've established that you're a cat before you say this'

Some remaining thoughts

- ▶ What does it mean for you to “establish that you’re a cat”?
- ▶ Not all cat characters in Japanese popculture/fiction say *-nya* (Akizuki 2012; Kawasaki 2015)
- ▶ You have to *psychologically* be a cat (cf., Hello Kitty)



Source: <https://comicsalliance.com/hello-kitty-actually-is-a-cat/>

- ▶ Another factor: it must be presupposed that cats speak to humans in that world (cf., Marie from Aristocats)



Source: <https://disney.fandom.com/wiki/Marie>

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Re: My questions

1. Does social meaning have a place in formal semantics?
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3. What even is role language?
4. What does this tell us about why we say stuff?

My (longer) answers

1. Does social meaning have a place in formal semantics?

- ➡ Yes: it shares properties with other secondary entailments, and it makes sense to analyze it as a type of context change potential

2. What makes social meaning special compared to other kinds of non-truth-conditional meaning?

- ➡ It's a restriction on the input context like some secondary entailments, but it is inherently hearer-oriented

3. What even is role language?

- ➡ A type of social meaning; you're still requiring a certain persona of the speaker in the input context

4. What does this tell us about why we say stuff?

- ➡ 1. Some types of meaning inherently act upon the CG: the bin of agreed-upon facts. This is so we can narrow down the context set.
- 2. Social meaning isn't about world facts at all; it's more about adding properties to the bin of personas. This is to construct your identity.

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