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Reviewed by CHRIS CUMMINS, *Universität Bielefeld*

The ongoing expansion of interest in experimental semantics and pragmatics has seen its techniques being applied to increasingly many theoretical questions (Noveck & Sperber 2004, Sauerland & Yatsushiro 2009). The experimental approach promises to shed new light on long-contested issues that cannot be resolved by intuitions alone, concerning, for instance, the time-course of semantic and pragmatic processes. At the same time, this rapid expansion raises a number of risks: experiments can lose their connection with the theory, relevant work can be overlooked, and it may become increasingly difficult to obtain a clear picture of how the work in the field coheres (if at all).

Many of the opportunities, and some of the problems, are encapsulated in Jörg Meibauer and Markus Steinbach's edited volume. This collection, arising from the workshop of the same name at the Deutsche Gesellschaft für Sprachwissenschaft (DGfS) meeting in 2008, offers a diverse range of methodological approaches to a correspondingly broad selection of theoretical issues. As the editors themselves admit, 'the resulting picture is by no means a coherent one' (11). This lack of coherence is reflected in the lack of thematic organization, chapters being ordered alphabetically by author. Still, some themes appear more central to the enterprise than others—as one would expect from the editors' introduction, implicatures are well represented, but other interesting work in this collection relates more tenuously to their stated aims.

I should stress that, in my view, one of the particular strengths of this book is that the literature reviews are generally very satisfactory, considered, and interesting. Consequently, this volume stands as a valuable introduction to very many of the issues that are currently under investigation in the field. At the same time, the experimental work generally lacks some of the definitiveness and authority of the theoretical discussion. This arises for several reasons: some of the work presented here concerns preliminary or pilot studies, and some has been superseded by more recent publications by the same authors, a consequence of the inevitable lag between the workshop and the publication of a book. Moreover, the presentation of materials is not always as complete as might be hoped. It is of course true that I have concerns about many aspects of the methodologies employed here—I think everyone in the field has concerns about everyone's methodologies, including their own—but as the authors have no right of reply to my comments here, I propose to exercise a certain amount of discretion.

To address the alphabetical injustice meted out to ARJEN ZONDERVAN, I discuss the chapters in reverse order. His work, 'The role of QUD and focus on the scalar implicature of *most*', concerns the role of question under discussion (QUD) and focus, which are argued to influence the generation of scalar implicatures from terms such as *most* (+> 'not all') and *or* (+> '–and'). The exper-

imental results he discusses support an effect of this kind, which is perhaps most interesting for its implications for the experimental paradigm in general. Zondervan uses the truth value judgment task (TVJT) of Crain and Thornton (1998), with minor adaptations, and his results are shown to be sensitive to the precise wording of the task. He notes also that the TVJT may be capturing the acceptability of underinformativeness rather than the generation of scalar implicature, chiming in with the observations of Katsos and Bishop (2011).

PETRA B. SCHUMACHER's contribution, '*The hepatitis called ...* : Electrophysiological evidence for enriched composition', discusses (to my relief) the phenomenon of coercion, and specifically reference transfer. Apparently nonreferring expressions can be reinterpreted in order to resolve discourse infelicities; thus, if a doctor is told that 'the hepatitis called', s/he will infer that the referent is the (salient) patient with hepatitis. Schumacher reports an event-related potentials (ERP) study revealing a late positivity for reference transfer versus control conditions, which she interprets as indicating additional processing costs in the critical trials. She discusses these results particularly with reference to the findings of Nieuwland and van Berkum (2005), who exhibited similar findings but who considered the items anomalous, a point that Schumacher rebuts with off-line judgment data.

HANS-CHRISTIAN SCHMITZ's chapter, 'Blocking modal enrichment (*tatsächlich*)', provides a careful and readable discussion of a curious real-life example of time reporting: *It's five past three, but my watch is 5 minutes fast*. Demonstrating exhaustively that this is interpreted as meaning that the time is three o'clock, he characterizes this as arising from a modal operator *by the speaker's watch* being applied to the semantics of the first conjunct. He then shows that the German adverb *tatsächlich* 'in fact' blocks this process of 'modal enrichment'. The extent of data brought to bear on the issue makes this paper an outstanding example of the use of experimental methods to validate intuitions, almost to a fault. There is also perhaps an excess of semantic heavy machinery being used on this admittedly interesting construction.

KATHARINA J. ROHLFING's chapter, 'Meaning in the objects', covers perhaps the most remote topic from the core of experimental semantics/pragmatics as conceived by the editors. She discusses a pilot study concerning whether the canonicity of objects (loosely, whether they are oriented appropriately to perform their function) influences the gestural behavior of mothers instructing twenty-to-twenty-six-month-old children to manipulate toys in accordance with spatial relations. I found this work interesting on its own terms, but I have to take it largely on trust when the author affirms the relevance of this work to experimental pragmatics (on the basis that these results argue for the careful use of ecologically valid objects, where applicable).

In 'Numerals and scalar implicatures', DANIELE PANIZZA and GENNARO CHIERCHIA write on the topic of numerals, exploring the relation between the polarity of their contexts of occurrence and the extent to which they attract exact readings. Specifically, they show that the lower-bounded interpretation of numerals ('at least *n*') occurs preferentially in downward-entailing contexts, compared to 'minimally different' upward-entailing ones. I am not sure that I agree with the way they assess the similarity of contexts, but their research clearly represents an appreciable challenge to theories that take an exact meaning as the core semantics of numerals, as more fully spelled out in Panizza et al. 2009.

LEAH R. PALTIEL-GEDALYOVICH's chapter, 'Adult response uniformity distinguishes semantics from pragmatics: Implications for child language', presents experimental data in support of two major theses. One of these is a very important point for much of developmental work, namely that if adult behavior is inconsistent, then it is extremely difficult—if not logically impossible—to analyze child data. The argument is simply that if adults are not consistent in choosing between two options, any given child response might constitute an instance of adult-like behavior, and it is thus impossible to tease out the developmental trajectory. The author's second thesis is that the difference between semantics and pragmatics can be articulated as the former resulting in consistent adult behavior, while the latter results in inconsistent behavior. At one level this is clearly correct, in that semantics may be taken to refer to context-independent properties of meaning, and pragmatics to context-dependent properties: hence, if we vary the context, pragmatic judgments should vary. The author further claims that pragmatic judgments are inherently inconsistent, but I

think this argument is confused, and that the data from Chierchia et al. 2001, discussed in this chapter (120), actually provide a straightforward counterexample. Nevertheless, the idea merits attention.

ANJA MÜLLER, PETRA SCHULZ, and BARBARA HÖHLE start out in ‘Pragmatic children: How German children interpret sentences with and without the focus particle *only*’ to consider the acquisition of the focus particle *nur* ‘only’ in German. Their specific contribution, however, is actually methodological: they show that the results of a previous study (Paterson et al. 2003) are at least partially attributable to the complexity of the visual scenario used, and the way in which that scenario is involved in licensing the set of alternative utterances. While the authors’ primary concern is discussing the case of *nur* with respect to their findings, the implications of their work are potentially more widespread, and could influence the interpretation of the growing body of child (and adult) research relying upon elaborate visual displays.

VINCENZO MOSCATI’s chapter, ‘Discourse under control in ambiguous sentences’, deals with scope ambiguities, specifically addressing the Italian modal verb *potere* ‘can’ and negation. This raises the thorny issue of isomorphism—the hypothesized preference for semantic scope assignments that match syntactic scope assignments (Musolino et al. 2000)—for which experimental data suggest a counterintuitive developmental trajectory. Moscati shows that the availability of non-adult-like interpretations of, for instance, *not necessary* in English also holds in Italian. I found the discussion of the experimental work in this chapter rather difficult to follow, and did not come away with a clear sense of precisely how these findings relate to the broader literature.

FRANK LIEDTKE’s ‘The impact of literal meaning on what-is-said’ addresses the equally thorny, and even more widely discussed, topic of ‘what is said’. This chapter is especially rich in its exploration of the literature, considering the perceived problem and several experimental attempts to address it in some detail. Liedtke’s work has the advantage of providing a full specification of his experimental materials as well as the methodology, and discussing the results in equally comprehensive terms. The results are not without interest, although it is never made entirely clear why the intuitive views of language users about what is said versus what is implicated, for instance, should necessarily be a useful basis for a theoretical analysis. I would personally approve of any attempt to dispense with the theory and reduce both issues to purely empirical matters, although I suspect this is not Liedtke’s motivation.

The first alphabetically, ROBERT KURTZ and RONNIE WILBUR discuss ‘The development of conversational competence in children with specific language impairment’ (SLI). It is quite striking that this builds upon an older tradition of work, and refers comparatively little to recent literature. It is a considered and worthwhile attempt, however, to apply a distinct framework to the analysis of SLI, namely that of Bishop & Adams 1989, to show whether children with SLI may be observed to violate rules of conversational behavior (with potential consequences for their social access). This is presented as a pilot study that might lead to the development of SLI diagnostic tools based upon interactive behaviors, an idea that on this evidence has potential, although it remains to be seen how such an approach would compare with other current trends in this area.

In my view, the book lacks the coherence and clarity to constitute an indispensable contribution to the literature. Still, there is much of value in it, and it serves as one route into the rich and diverse theoretical and experimental landscape of the field (approximately) as it stands. Future work in this growing area may increasingly have to compromise between presenting cutting-edge research and achieving such a breadth of coverage.

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Negative indefinites. By DORIS PENKA. (Oxford studies in theoretical linguistics.) Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2011. Pp. 264. ISBN 9780199567270. \$45.

Reviewed by ELENA HERBURGER, *Georgetown University*

In *Negative indefinites* Doris Penka focuses on three topics in the syntax and semantics of negation: negative concord, the split-scope readings of negative quantifiers in German, and the restricted distribution of quantifiers in Scandinavian. P argues that in each instance what looks like a negative quantifier is really an indefinite whose apparent negative force derives from a separate—at times tacit, at times overt—negation operator with which the indefinite enters an agreement relation. In addition to methodically making a case for analyzing negative quantifiers as NEGATIVE INDEFINITES, the book also discusses a large number of existing analyses and paradigms, offering a valuable and timely survey of some of the current literature.

The first third of the book is devoted to negative concord, where what looks like one and the same expression (N-WORD) appears to have negative force in certain contexts and merely existential force in others. P rejects various previous accounts, including the view that so-called n-words like Spanish *nadie* or Russian *nikto* are negative quantifiers (e.g. Zanuttini 1991), the view that they are their negative polarity counterparts (e.g. Laka 1990, Ladusaw 1992), and the view that they are ambiguous between the two (Herburger 2001). Adopting Zeijlstra's (2004) approach instead, she analyzes n-words like *nadie/nikto* as existential quantifiers in need of syntactic agreement with an overt or tacit negation operator. P then extends the analysis to French, which poses particular challenges.

Since the account of negative concord P adopts bears architectural resemblances to the negative polarity item (NPI) accounts of negative concord, it faces similar challenges. To explain the occurrence of n-words without negation (e.g. in elliptical answers and in preverbal positions in nonstrict negative concord languages like Spanish) it posits a silent negation operator. To constrain the distribution of this operator, P appeals to an economy condition that forces the insertion of a silent negation operator if the derivation would otherwise crash. Because P assumes that the negation with which the n-word agrees always takes scope over the event operator, her account does not capture the occurrence of n-words that appear in postverbal position without a negation and that are interpreted as narrow-scope negative quantifiers (Herburger 2001).

In connection with the general resemblance of the negative indefinite and the NPI accounts of negative concord just pointed out, it is worth noting that P insists that negative concord and NPI