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Philosophy of Language (Cambridge Textbooks in Linguistics), Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, 2019, xii + 327 pp.

Several books in the Cambridge Textbooks in Linguistics series have already covered topics relevant to philosophical research (e.g. *Logic in Linguistics*, *Semantic Theory*, *Pragmatics*, *Formal Semantics*); the recent addition to the series is explicitly devoted to philosophy of language, though it is “thoroughly grounded in contemporary linguistic theory” and it is “written for linguists and philosophers who have some familiarity with linguistics” (p. xi). The approach applied within the textbook is, by default, the analytic one (as in most contemporary handbooks and companions). For appropriate background to the topics discussed in this book, one might consult the titles mentioned above, and additionally Heim and Kratzer’s *Semantics in Generative Grammar*, and Soames’ *Philosophy of Language* (or the more accessible *Introduction to the Philosophy of Language* by Michael Morris and *Philosophy for Linguists* by Siobhan Chapman).

Since “philosophy gave birth to modern semantics and pragmatics” (p. xi), and furthermore “modern semantics and pragmatics emerged from the work of philosophers and philosophically inclined mathematicians” (p. 1), it is not surprising that the first two parts of the book are devoted to philosophy of semantics and philosophy of pragmatics, respectively, with the third part tackling meaning as a philosophical problem. The short introductory section discusses three debates which heavily influenced the development of contemporary semantics and pragmatics: Quine vs. Carnap on intensionality, Russell vs. Strawson on referring, and Ayer vs. Geach on ethical statements. The authors comment on the role of philosophical assumptions (both explicit and implicit) in scientific studies of meaning, point to the early antecedents of the current debates on the division of labor between semantics and pragmatics, and stress the importance of the interaction of linguistic considerations with philosophical theories.

Part I, “Philosophy of Semantics”, starts with a chapter on Frege and Tarski, followed by chapters on compositionality (and

other relevant issues such as productivity and context), reference and quantification, tense and modality (with sections on, among other issues, possibility and possible worlds, and possibilities), and intentionality (with a discussion of mental phenomena, unreality and propositions). The discussion of the achievements, influences, but also limitations of Fregean and Tarskian semantics leads to the observation that “linguists have added something that was not appreciated by Frege, Tarski, or Carnap: respect for natural languages and a powerful arsenal of methods for dealing with semantic evidence. Linguists’ confidence in the ultimate orderliness and underlying rationality of natural languages has proved to be far more rewarding than the skepticism of the [early] logicians and philosophers” (p. 40).

In the conclusion to the chapter on compositionality (understood as interpretation of complex expressions in terms of the interpretations of their simpler parts), the authors stress that “adhering to the principle of compositionality forces us to think in a highly systematic way, linking semantic interpretation with syntactic structure. This makes it a fruitful hypothesis. But perhaps it is more than that: a generalization that holds across all possible human languages and has the force of a law” (p. 63).

In a short section on time and philosophy and linguistics, the authors remark that “using centered worlds to enrich the representation of propositions, we are able to maintain a natural extension of the standard semantic theory that is free of subjectivity and that appears to deal with the most pressing difficulties” (p. 104). Every chapter in this part demonstrates the benefits of supplementing research within formal linguistics with insights from philosophy (and, by extension, the benefits of formal linguistic analyses for philosophical inquiries). At the same time, however, it is necessary to keep linguistic problems apart from the philosophical ones.

Part II, “Philosophy of Pragmatics”, comprises five chapters: on Austin and Grice (with sections on the classical issues of ordinary language, speech acts, speaker meaning, conversational implicature), on context and content (complementing the discussion of compositionality in chapter 2), on common ground and conversational update, on implicature and figurative speech, and on asser-

tion and other speech acts. Philosophers have focused considerable attention on the speech act of assertion since “what makes assertion unique among speech acts is its capacity to transfer knowledge” (p. 234). The topics discussed in this part clearly demonstrate the benefits of integrating results from linguistics and philosophy for better understanding of meaning and communication.

In the conclusion to the chapter on implicature and figurative speech the authors claim that there are areas of pragmatics that are far closer to philosophy than to linguistics and that some of the best work on metaphor and figurative language “has been done by philosophers more concerned with aesthetics and philosophy of art than with philosophy of language” (p. 216). One might add here that also cognitive linguistics has provided important contributions to these debates, the same is also true of such uses of language as irony, fruitfully studied by philosophy (and it needs to be stressed that definitely not only within the analytic tradition), linguistics, theory of literature, and, more recently, cognitive psychology.

Part III is devoted to “Meaning as a Philosophical Problem”, and covers such topics as meaning and use (including a discussion of Grice’s program, and Lewis’ program), externalism and internalism (with a brief note on skepticism about semantics, followed by a discussion of different thought experiments, and notes on narrow content), and paradox and vagueness. Paradoxes constitute one of the perennial problems for philosophical analysis and “linguistic semantics shares with mathematics the honor of having its foundations infested with paradoxes” (p. 277). The chapter shows ways of addressing semantic paradoxes by enforcing a clear separation of object language and metalanguage, whereas in developing an adequate theory of vagueness some amount of arbitrariness is inevitable (p. 288).

The book is furnished with a very useful glossary of key terms, concepts and symbols, a bibliography and two indexes (names and subjects).

Philosophy of Language is a most stimulating but also rather demanding textbook (especially in Part I); an advanced and up-to-date introduction to philosophical understanding of meaning and

communication. Relevant parts of the textbook could be used in different courses on semantics and pragmatics. Additionally, Szabó and Thomason clearly demonstrate the benefits of collaboration between philosophy of language and linguistics, and prove that the standard works of Frege, Russell, Tarski, Quine, Austin, Grice, still have very much to offer, and that new interpretations and re-interpretations of those classics are possible and highly desired.

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