

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

- (7) 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

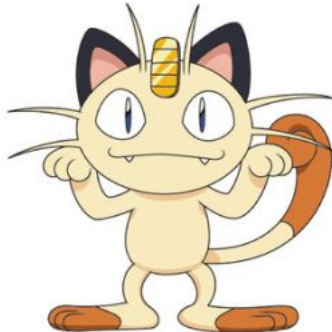
She brought a pie [pa:]

≠

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

- (8) [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

- (9) 🐱 : 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



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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

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

Secondary entailments

- (11) 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

- (12) 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)

- (13) 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)

- (14) 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:**

(15) # Ai is from Georgia. Ai is from Georgia.
(primary entailment)

(16) # 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:**

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

(18) 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)

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

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

➡ SM: 'I'm from
the South'

(20) 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)

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

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

➡ SM: 'I'm from
the South'

(22) 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)



No.

Speaker vs. hearer orientation

(23) That bastard Gary ‘I hate Gary’

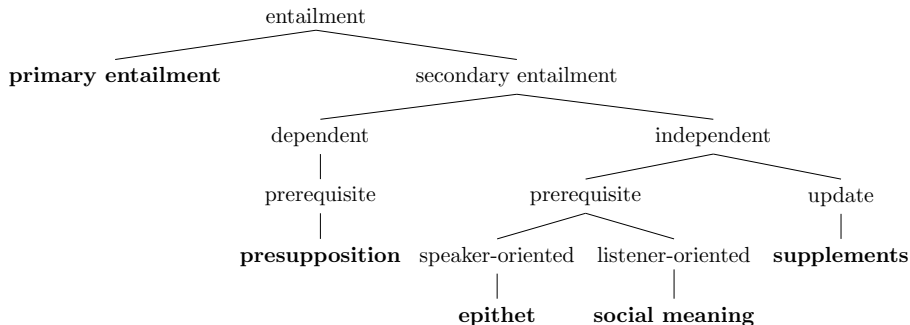
(24) Pie [pa:] ‘I’m from the South, I’m nice, I’m unintelligent ...’
(cf., Allbritten 2011)

➡ 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

(25) *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

(26) *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

$$(27) \quad \mathcal{F}_{a:} = \left\{ \begin{array}{l} \lambda x \lambda w. \mathbf{southern}_w(x), \lambda x \lambda w. \neg \mathbf{intelligent}_w(x), \\ \lambda x \lambda w. \mathbf{nice}_w(x) \dots \end{array} \right\}$$

$$(28) \quad \mathcal{I} = \left\{ \begin{array}{l} \lambda x \lambda w. \mathbf{southern}_w(x), \lambda x \lambda w. \mathbf{intelligent}_w(x), \\ \lambda x \lambda w. \mathbf{nice}_w(x), \lambda x \lambda w. \neg \mathbf{nice}_w(x), \lambda x \lambda w. \mathbf{feminine}_w(x) \end{array} \right\}$$

$$(29) \quad \mathcal{F}_{a:} \cap \mathcal{I} = \{ \lambda x \lambda w. \mathbf{southern}_w(x), \lambda x \lambda w. \mathbf{nice}_w(x) \}$$

➡ 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')

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

a. $= \lambda x \lambda w [\mathbf{pie}_w(x)]$ (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

$$(31) \quad \lambda C \lambda C' \left[(\mathcal{F}_{a:} \cap \mathcal{I}) \subseteq \mathcal{P}_{\text{SPKR}}^C \right]$$

(32) $\mathcal{P}_{\text{SPKR}}$ = 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 (31) 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

- (33) 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

- (34) 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

(35) You have jussst made a ssssseriousss missstake!

Not just cats

- (36) 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

- (37) 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

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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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