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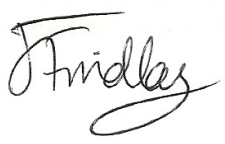
Signature: 	Date: **07-Oct-2017**

Learning to teach linguistics

Jamie Y. Findlay

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In this portfolio, I reflect on some of my recent teaching experience. It consists of three main parts. In Section 1, I give an overview of my own thinking on teaching, in particular in relation to the tutorial system and its strengths. I turn in Section 2 to my experiences of teaching linguistics in the past year, which consisted of one set of tutorials and occasional lecturing, and consider the strengths and weaknesses of my own practice, including how it accommodates for student diversity. Finally, in Section 3, I look back at my own development as a teacher, and think about my goals for the future.

1 Teaching values

> *[W]hile it may be true that there is factual material to be* learned*, it is not true that the factual material merely has to be memorised.*
>
> (Shale 2001: 65)

Pratt (2002) suggests that there are (at least) five different 'perspectives' that one can take on teaching. These are not approaches to teaching, but rather conceptions of what teaching *is*. This offers a good starting point for considering one's teaching philosophy as a whole.

My perspective on teaching is primarily what Pratt calls 'developmental'. That is, I see learning as a process whereby the student makes use of their pre-existing knowledge and cognitive structures in their approach to new data or knowledge. The teacher does not provide new material, necessarily, but rather probes the student's existing knowledge and ways

of thinking to encourage them to use these to respond to new information. In this way, we are 'teaching students to think' rather than merely imparting knowledge. Such a model is, I believe, the one underlying the tutorial system at Oxford. Tutorials are not intended to be mini-lectures, but rather spaces for questioning and developing ideas. They need not have a conclusion, but they should make the student think hard about the topic and about their own arguments, and preferably re-think some of their preconceived notions. At least this is the idea.

Such an optimistic view of the Oxford tutorial is not one shared by all, however. It matches Moore's (1968) idea of the tutorial as a space for critical examination, and what Ashwin (2005) describes as the "more sophisticated" conceptions of tutorials that some of the students he surveyed held. But Elton (2001), for example, has painted a rather more pessimistic view of the tutorial as a space for the tutor to proselytise and lecture to a captive audience. This is also how the majority of the students surveyed by Ashwin described matters. Such understandings of tutorial teaching are thoroughly entrenched in the 'transmission' perspective on teaching, whereby the goal of teaching is to "efficiently and effectively pass along (teach) a common body of knowledge and way of thinking similar to what is in the text or the teacher" (Pratt 2002: 7), and the student is therefore seen as "a 'container' to be filled with something (knowledge)" (*ibid.*). Although of course even transmission teaching can benefit from the individual attention and bespoke syllabus that the tutorial system allows, I feel that to constrain the tutorial in this way is to bypass its single biggest strength, which is the chance for dialogue. Transmission is necessarily a one-way event, but tutorials permit a back and forth between tutor and student that allows for the development of not just knowledge, but thinking, too.

Of course, in any discipline there are some basic facts of the matter which must be 'transmitted' to the student, but in the best systems even this can incorporate an element of student engagement. Such is one of the strengths of the Oxford tutorial system: as emphasised by Horn (2013), the preparation done before a tutorial is just as integral a part of the system as the hour of tutor contact. The writing of an essay and the reading done in advance constitute a kind of investigation on the part of the student. Although in some sense there is still a simple transmission of knowledge, in this case from text to student rather than from teacher to student, the act of finding the information themselves gives the

student a different level of personal engagement with this knowledge. What is more, by being exposed to several distinct approaches/ideas in the reading, rather than taking one course textbook as gospel, the student is forced to engage their critical faculties even at this transmission stage, so that they synthesise what they are reading and reach their own conclusions. This is further bolstered by the tutorial essay itself, which requires the student to undertake such synthesis and to firm up at least a preliminary version of their own thinking.

Another perspective on teaching which Pratt (2002) identifies, and which I think is an extremely important lens through which to view the tutorial, is the 'nurturing' perspective. This emphasises learning as a product of the heart rather than the head. As Pratt puts it, "[p]eople become motivated and productive learners when they are working on issues or problems without fear of failure" (2002: 11). Especially in the potentially highly confrontational setting of a tutorial, where students are asked to defend their arguments and their views in the face of a perceived authority, it is absolutely imperative that students feel safe and respected enough to express themselves and try out new ideas. If they perceive the threat of being wrong as greater than the reward of trying out their arguments and ideas in discussion, then the tutorial will serve very little purpose that could not equally well be achieved by other means such as simple written feedback.

In fact, this perspective is ineluctably linked to the developmental view of tutorial teaching described above. For without such nurturing, students are much less likely to see tutorials as the safe spaces for experimental thinking they are intended to be. Without that sense of safety, tutorials become confrontational, with the tutor assessing and judging. In such a space, it is only natural that students will not take full advantage of what tutorials can offer. Such an opinion is corroborated by Ashwin's (2005) findings that students' perspectives on tutorial teaching corrolated with expectations of learning outcomes. Those who had the more sophisticated views of tutorials tended to profit from them more. Put simply, "students' conceptions of the academic task that they are engaged in will affect the way they engage in it and the quality of their learning outcomes" (Ashwin 2005: 643). If the tutor is perceived as an adversary, it will take an exceptional student to dare challenge them, given the clear asymmetry of power and expertise. If they are perceived as a (nurturing) collaborator, who demonstrates that they value the student's contribu-

tions, then most if not all students can benefit from the opportunity to air their own thoughts.

2 My teaching

> *Are these conversations sometimes complicated and inconclusive? Yes, absolutely. But they plant the seeds for students to continue thinking critically about these ideas.*
>
> (Curzan 2013: e5)

In this section, I examine some of my own teaching in light of the ideals espoused in Section 1. I consider two different kinds of teaching. The first is a series of eight semantics tutorials given to a visiting student in Hilary Term 2017. For these, I was responsible for designing the course and for delivering the teaching. The second consists of three unrelated lectures given over the course of Hilary and Trinity Terms 2017 in syntax and 'formal foundations of linguistics'. These were instances where I was filling in for my supervisor in her absence, and so the material was pre-prepared, and I had to fit into an existing schedule.

In Section 2.1 I discuss the content of the tutorial teaching. In Section 2.2, I look at my lecturing, and the different challenges that lecturing poses. Section 2.3 briefly considers the question of student diversity and what this means for the Oxford tutorial. Finally, in Section 2.4, I discuss reviews I received of my teaching, both from a student and from a peer observer.

2.1 Tutorials

The student I was asked to teach had never studied semantics before, and so I aimed to design a course which covered the crucial areas and gave a good overview both of key topics and key techniques in semantic analysis. Of course, this is to a certain extent subjective. Indeed, I gave a greater focus to formal/compositional semantics, since that is where my interests lie, than to e.g. lexical semantics or pragmatics. A course outline is given in Appendix A, showing the eight topics we covered and the key points within each one.

A crucial component of the tutorial system is the work done by students in advance of the one hour of contact, and an important aspect of

this is the reading list. Appendix B contains an example reading list. I included a relatively small number of texts, six, rather than the extensive and more exhaustive reading lists some tutors provide. The trade-off is that I expected the student to at least attempt to read *all* of the material on the reading list. I find this more focussed approach advantageous, but it is in contrast to that of many tutors who provide a long reading list with the expectation that students read selectively from it.

After the reading and the writing of the essay of course comes the tutorial itself. Since one of the strengths of a tutorial is its flexibility, it is somewhat difficult to plan in advance. Nevertheless, I find it useful to have an idea of the key points I want to mention. At the same time, I strive not to be overly constrained by such a plan, and will gladly let the conversation wander, following the student's thoughts through to their logical conclusions and exploring the consequences of different perspectives. As the epigraph to this section points out, sometimes these conversations are "complicated and inconclusive", but they are nevertheless important. This kind of discussion "doesn't particularly have a conclusion [...] like an essay would, it just gets you thinking and often leaves you with a different perspective at the end of it", as one student from Ashwin's (2005: 639) study put it.

Figure 1 (p. 6) contains my plan for the tutorial corresponding to the topic in Appendix B. I include some time at the start to discuss any pastoral issues or other extra-curricular concerns that may have arisen. The tutorial system affords tutors a much closer relationship with their students than other systems, and one advantage of this is that we are in a better position to help tackle pastoral issues early. Making it clear that we are interested in the student's wellbeing also helps to foster the 'nurturing' environment which I believe makes tutorial teaching more successful.

After this initial chit-chat, I will ask if there are any outstanding questions from last week's tutorial, especially from my written feedback on the essay. Following this, the tutorial begins with a discussion of the reading, where I will ask the student if they encountered anything particularly challenging or stimulating. This is a good opportunity to clear up any simple terminological confusion, and lay the technical groundwork for discussion in the rest of the tutorial. It will also inevitably lead on to further debate and conversation around the topics which emerge from the questioning.

Past this point, the plan includes a list of the main themes I think we

Sense and reference

3 minutes	Pastoral questions and follow up from last time
12 minutes	Discussion of reading: Anything particularly challenging/puzzling? Anything particularly interesting? ↪ Topics arising from this
Main themes	
3 minutes	What is Frege's puzzle?
7 minutes	Different theories of names
12 minutes	Kripke's objections to the description theory ↪How convincing are they?
8 minutes	Multidimensionality – revisit sense and reference (student struggled with how e.g. Richard's ideas align with the notion of 'sense')

Figure 1: Plan of a tutorial on 'sense and reference'

ought to cover in the tutorial. If the conversation is flowing naturally, I may attempt to steer it towards these; if it dries up, then these are good prompts. The timings are a guide, but mostly bear no resemblance to reality, since things inevitably spill over, and it goes without saying that stimulating discussion should not be cut short unless absolutely necessary. This is also why I only timetable for 45 out of the 50 minutes.

Sometimes it is worthwhile to focus more on topics a student has discussed in their essay, but sometimes it is more productive to go beyond this and talk about other points in the reading, especially where the student showed a thorough grasp of the topics they covered in their writing. In this particular case, it was clear from the student's essay and their comments via email that they had struggled to understand a particular point (how Frege's 'sense' could be reconciled with Richard's ideas about belief ascriptions), and so I made a note that we should cover this in more detail.

Feedback is given to the student in two ways: in written form on the essay and in verbal form during the tutorial. I make sure that my comments in either medium show that I have read the student's essay carefully. As Lasnik (2013: e13) says, "[i]t is imperative as a teacher to convey that you take the students' work at least as seriously as they do"; if we want to encourage students to devote their time and energy to producing

essays of substance, it is crucial that we respect their hard work and do our share too. I return the essay with my written comments at the end of the tutorial, having marked it in advance. In my comments, I ensure that I give positive as well as critical feedback, highlighting what works and should be repeated, not just what doesn't and shouldn't. One important rule I try to follow in giving written feedback is to be as explicit as possible, saying what needs to be done to improve the problem, rather than merely highlighting an issue. This hopefully goes some way to mitigating the confusion which students face in interpreting elliptical or vague terms in feedback (Chanock 2000).

The reason that I give the essay back at the end of the tutorial is because during our discussion I want the student to think about what they have read and written without pre-emptively reading my own comments and potentially just parroting them back to me. It also offers a chance for the student to correct themselves, rather than being corrected. This is where the supposedly 'Socratic' method of tutorial teaching comes in: the student's problematic opinions or confused arguments are probed, with the hope that I can guide them to see for themselves the errors they have made or the complexities they have overlooked.

One disadvantage of returning the essay at the end rather than the start of the tutorial is that the student cannot ask for clarification on any comments straight away while the questions are fresh in their mind. Such an absence of immedaite discussion and clarification might lead to the problems identified by Nicol (2010) where a lack of dialogue leads to student dissatisfaction with feedback. This is particularly unfortunate given that the Oxford tutorial affords such a good opportunity for dialogue and for a personal approach to feedback. I attempt to remedy this by giving the student an opportunity at the start of the following tutorial to ask any questions about my feedback, and encourage them to contact me by email at any time if there are comments they are unclear about. But a week later they may have forgotten what they wanted to ask, and having to get in touch themselves may be off-putting. This is an area I would like to improve on, therefore.

2.2 Lecturing

While it may be true that lectures are just as good as any other medium of instruction at conveying information (Bligh 1998), they lack the self-directed component which tutorial reading offers. They do offer an opportunity for students to ask clarificatory questions of each other and of the lecturer, however, and can be important in ensuring students are directed to a core of key subject knowledge.

Students are not in general opposed to lectures as a medium. As Brown & Manogue (2001: 233) found, "[w]hat students disliked was not lectures, but poor quality lecturing". Specifically, Brown & Manogue found that poor quality lectures suffered from

- inaudibility,
- incoherence,
- talking too fast,
- poor use of audiovisual aids, and
- containing too much information.

The first three, at least, are often indicators of a lack of confidence with public speaking on the part of the lecturer. I have a strong background in public speaking, and so although I was obviously nervous in giving my first lecture, I managed to avoid the worst of the challenges facing those who dislike speaking aloud (see the feedback form in Appendix D, to be discussed in Section 2.4). Nevertheless, misuse of audiovisual aids and poor planning, leading to overloading with content, are very real dangers. In each of my lectures, I inherited the content, and so had little choice of how much to include. However, I was able to alter the pacing of the lectures to focus my time on what I thought was most important or conceptually challenging, thus hopefully mitigating any feelings of being overwhelmed which students might feel. I also inherited slides and/or handouts, but I managed to modify these a little to ensure they fitted with how I wanted to deliver the lectures.

One of the main issues which lectures face is their lack of student engagement with the material. The best way to rectify this is to find ways to incorporate opportunities for student participation (Horgan 2003). This

was challenging within my remit, since I was only present for one week, and so was expected to fit with the established style of lecturing. If I had been running the course myself, I could have established different norms and expectations from the start, but coming in to give one lecture it is difficult to shake things up too radically. Similarly, given that the content was largely prescribed, this limited what I could do in terms of different kinds of student activities.

Nevertheless, I did my best to incorporate some interactivity into my lectures, as an attempt to mitigate this lack of engagement and concomitant drop in attention. For example, after demonstrating a simple version of some analysis, I would present a more complex case, and ask the students to suggest a solution. I also asked questions which required no subject knowledge, only native-speaker judgements, both out of interest to myself and the group (showing the dialectal variation even within a small group of largely native English speakers), but also as a way to break the ice and encourage students to speak up. I believe this largely succeeded, as students did ask questions and engage with me in a more interactive way during the lectures.

2.3 Student diversity

The intense and adversarial atmosphere that some can feel in tutorials is the negative reflex of the intimate and personalised setting which enables tutorial teaching to be so tailored to the individual and thus so effective. How can we work to emphasise the positive and minimise the negative? And what kinds of students in particular are vulnerable to experiencing tutorials in a negative way? In this section I discuss shyness among students, as well as ideologically loaded subject matter and how this can particularly affect different types of students.

Timidity and shyness can be problematic characteristics in students, as they make it difficult to conduct the ideal tutorial.[1] How can we help shy students engage more? It is important to empower the student and make them feel comfortable enough to air their opinions and try out new

[1]It is sometimes suggested that such lack of assertiveness is characteristic of women or students with educational backgrounds less traditionally represented at Oxford. This is almost certainly not true; for one thing it is essentially impossible to make meaningful generalisations about such vast macro-categories as 'women' or 'state-educated students'.

ideas in a safe space (cf. the nurturing perspective discussed above). The right kind of probing questions can help achieve this: pointed or combative questions which might be seen as trying to trip the student up or catch them out are to be avoided; instead, open, constructive questions which promote an understanding of learning as a collaborative enterprise which the tutor and the student enter into together are to be encouraged. Phrasing is important (compare 'But what about X?' with 'Yes, and does that help us with X too?'), but so is intonation (a dismissive, flat 'What do you mean?' comes across as aggressive, while a rising, inquisitive pronunciation of the same question sounds engaged and interested).

Another important component is an approach to 'error' which tries to lead the student to make their own judgements and realise their own mistakes rather than being explicitly corrected or chastised. The "embarrassment" which Mirfield (2001: 27) discusses as a powerful motivator in his own learning is surely not necessary, and for many students would be wholly counterproductive. Mirfield contends that "there are some who are unsuited to the tutorial idea and there is nothing that can be done about it" (*ibid.*), but if by this he means there are some who are unsuited to being brow-beaten by a tutor and humiliated in front of their peers, then I think this is not the final word on their suitability for tutorial teaching in general. It is possible to make people question their own thinking, and "grow up intellectually", without breaking them down first.

Aside from the medium, the content of teaching can itself be ideologically loaded, and this can have special importance for different students. For example, many topics in sociolinguistics, which I have previously taught, have hugely politically charged subtexts: gender, where issues of patriarchy and the question of gender essentialism are raised; race, where racism and the systematic oppression of people of colour in Western culture are central to understanding the power dynamics involved in social stratification; or creole linguistics, where we will undoubtedly discuss slavery. Clearly, such topics will be received differently by students who belong to the oppressed or excluded groups. And equally clearly, since I do *not* belong to these groups, I am in a delicate position with regard to teaching. A white man explaining female oppression to a woman, or racial inequality to a BME student, can all too easily become an exemplar case of 'mansplaining' or 'whitesplaining'. Focussing on a student-led learning experience can help with this, and indeed fits very well with the developmental perspective on teaching: I am not necessarily telling

the students anything they do not already know, but rather helping them to develop new perspectives on their lived experiences, and gather new evidence to back up their thinking.

2.4 Reviewing my teaching

Receiving feedback on one's teaching is an excellent way of seeing how well one's theory actually translates into practice. After the eight tutorials described above, I therefore asked my student to fill in an evaluation form, given in Appendix C. In addition, I asked a colleague, Umberto Bongianino, to observe one of my lectures. His responses are given in Appendix D. Before I discuss the content of these reviews, I will briefly explain the reasoning behind their format.

Although numerical feedback is more useful for institutional appraisal than it is for personal development (McKeachie 1999), I included both numerical and qualitiative questions in the student feedback form, since this serves to make the form less intimidating and to add some variety, making it easier to fill in and therefore encouraging responses. I also included a self-evaluation question asking whether the student prepared fully for each tutorial, with the intention of making them reflect on the collaborative nature of learning. Questions 2 and 3 give the student an opportunity to give positive and critical feedback, just as I give to them, and questions 4 and 5 give optional space for more detailed comments or suggestions.

In my peer observation form, I included a sheet to be filled in by the lecturer, myself, in order to give the observer an idea of what my goals were and what particular challenges I anticipated. The sheet to be filled in by the observer once again includes questions inviting positive and more critical responses, and a space for any further comments. Question 3 also seeks feedback on the particular issues raised in the first part of the form.

I was pleased that my observer was of the opinion that I held the attention of the students in the lecture he attended, but he also noted that some of my attempts at student engagement were less successful than others. For instance, my questioning of students' judgements of the acceptabilty of certain sentences was found to be "superfluous". Perhaps more variety would have been good here, and this is something I will experiment with going forward.

Another suggestion from my observer was to use colour or other techniques to help make my slides themselves less monotonous. This is an important point, since poor use of audiovisual tools was one of the factors identified by Brown & Manogue (2001) as most frustrating for students. Using different colours is also advantageous for students with dyslexia, and so this would be a good opportunity to further improve my accommodation of student diversity.

The student review of the tutorial teaching was mostly positive, but did include some important issues for me to reflect on. The student had trouble with the formal logical notation used in some of the reading and in the tutorials. I deliberately did not spend time explaining this directly at the start of the course, because much of the reading introduces the relevant aspects when they become important, but perhaps I failed to put myself in the shoes of a student who truly has no background in formal semantics and to appreciate how difficult it is to pick these things up as one goes. If I were to teach this course again, I would at the very least include a short introduction to first order logic among the preliminary readings, even if I did not explicitly spend time in the tutorials going over particular issues in detail.

Although the student agreed that my feedback was generally "adequate and useful", it appears I unfortunately fell into the trap discussed by Chanock (2000) of demanding 'analysis' over 'description' (or as this student put it, 'summary') without adequately explaining what I meant by these terms. The student suggests that the essay titles (almost all taken from past exam papers) invited "literature review" over analysis. It might be true that the titles invited one to consider the state of the art in the field, but it seems to me that a good literature review is by its nature analytical: if one does not critique the literature, then it is not much of a *review*. Nonetheless, it is clear that I did not articulate well enough what I wanted to see from the student to elevate their work from summary to analysis. With only a single student to consider, it is impossible to know how much was my poor feedback and how much their unwillingness to take it to heart, but in future I want to make sure that I make it very clear what is missing from an essay if I find it too descriptive. I will give concrete examples of what questions raised by the description still need to be addressed, for example, or what shortcomings or inconsistencies remain unresolved.

3 The future

> *'No hiding place' is how some tutors like to describe it, and that goes as much for the tutor as the student.*
>
> (Pearson 2001: 29)

As this quotation makes clear, tutorial teaching is not only potentially frightening for the student, but can leave the tutor feeling exposed and vulnerable too. The tutor is not always in control like they are in a lecture; in fact the whole enterprise is founded on a willingness to be challenged, and not to rest on the laurels granted by academic superiority. This means tutorial teaching is a difficult skill to learn, and one which takes a lot of practice to master. In this section, I consider my own development as a teacher so far, and where I see that leading me in the future.

A central tenet of the developmental perspective is that the student should play an active role in their learning, and the teacher's job is in part to discover how best to facilitate this. For example, by asking well-chosen questions, they can enable the student to deploy their own knowledge or thinking to make sense of the new information under discussion. Tutorials are perfect for this, but it requires two important, and related, characteristics on the part of the tutor: flexibility and confidence.

Flexibility is important because it enables student contributions to meaningfully guide the tutorial. If a tutor sticks too rigidly to a schedule or list of topics, shutting down interesting conversations, the tutorial becomes too tutor-led, and the student's contributions are diminished. But this openness is a learned skill. When I began tutoring, I would come into the tutorial with very detailed notes and lists of questions I wanted to discuss, in the order I wanted to discuss them. But this led to rather stilted tutorials, and, what is worse, can easily create the impression that the tutorial is a test, with the student being quizzed rather than invited to contribute to discussion. As I have gained more experience, and more confidence, I have become much more flexible in my teaching, keeping a vague plan but happily departing from it when appropriate.

Confidence is important in another respect too. Sometimes students can be hesitant to participate in tutorials, and so we must coax them into doing so. One way to encourage more student input is to "not be afraid of a little silence" (Lasnik 2013: e16): when we ask a question, we must wait, and give the student time to answer (and time to think about their

answer beforehand). If, in the absence of immediate student response, we always answer our own questions, then the student soon learns to see all of our questions as rhetorical. Unfortunately, this is an area where I still need to improve. I have a tendency to talk too much in tutorials, which is in part borne out of enthusiasm for the subject, but undoubtedly also from nerves and a lack of confidence. Letting the silence continue, letting the student think, is a tough skill, but a crucial one. I have improved with practice, and with increased confidence, but this is definitely something I am still learning to do better. As ever, we teachers are also students ourselves.

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Appendix A

Semantics tutorials

Week1 **Compositionality**

- Productivity of language
- Conceptions of predicates:
  - as unsaturated properties
  - as sets
  - as functions
- Attributive vs. predicative adjectives
  - predicate modification
  - higher order properties
  - type-shifting

Week 2 **Sense and reference**

- Frege's puzzle
- Direct reference theories of names
- Description theories of names
  - Searle: cluster theory
  - Kripke's arguments against names as descriptions
    ↪ names as rigid designators
- Other solutions to the puzzle
  - multi-dimensionality
  - guises

Week 3 **Implicatures**

- Gricean maxims
  - flouting vs. violating the maxims
- Different types of implicatures:
  - particularised conversational vs. generalised conversational vs. conventional
- Properties of/tests for conversational implicatures
  - Cancellability
  - Non-detachability
  - Calculability
  - Non-conventionality
  - Reinforceability

Week 4 **Presupposition**

- Defining presuppositions: semantics vs. pragmatics
- Types of presupposition trigger
- Presupposition failure
  - accommodation
- The projection problem:
  - plugs, holes, filters
- Relationship with other 'side-issue' meanings

Week 5 **Quantifiers**

- Generalised quantifiers: beyond $\forall$ and $\exists$
  - denote sets of sets
- Quantifier determiners
  - strong vs. weak determiners
- Advantages of generalised approach
  - e.g. uniform analysis of NPs

Week 6 **Intensionality**

- Extension vs. intension
- Possible worlds
- Different uses of possible worlds:
  - modality
  - propositional attitudes
  - counterfactuals

Week 7 **Definite descriptions**

- Quantifiers (Russell) vs. referring expressions (Strawson)
- Problems with DDs as referring expressions
  - (apparent) reference to non-existent entities
  - failure of substitutivity (e.g. Frege's puzzle)
- Strawson: presupposition failures lead to truth-value gaps
- Attributive vs. referential uses

Week 8 **Adverbs**

- Predicate adverbs vs. sentential adverbs
- Event semantics:
  - adverbs as predicates of events
- 'Subject-oriented' adverbs
- Adverbs as operators/predicate modifiers

Appendix B

Sense and Reference

Jamie Findlay
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Essay

What is Frege's puzzle? Describe and critically evaluate ONE OR MORE attempts to solve it.

Reading

Backgound

*Frege, Gottlob. 1948 [1892]. Sense and reference. *The Philosophical Review* 57(3). 209–230 (translated by Max Black from the original 'Über Sinn und Bedeutung', in *Zeitschrift für Philosophie und philosophische Kritik* 100, 25–50).

Hornsby, Jennifer & Guy Longworth. 2006. *Reading philosophy of language*. Oxford, UK: Blackwell. [Part 1: Reference and Meaning.]

Lycan, William G. 2006. Names. In Michael Devitt & Richard Hanley (eds.), *The Blackwell guide to the philosophy of language*, 255–273. Oxford, UK: Blackwell.

Advanced

Chalmers, David J. 2008. Two-dimensional semantics. In Ernest Lepore & Barry C. Smith (eds.), *The Oxford handbook of philosophy of language*, 574–606. Oxford, UK: Oxford University Press.

*Kripke, Saul. 1980. *Naming and necessity*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press. [Lectures I and especially II.]

Richard, Mark. 1983. Direct reference and ascriptions of belief. *Journal of Philosophical Logic* 12(4). 425–452. [Read up to the end of Part I.]

Appendix C

Student Evaluation Form

Name of tutor: ... Jamie Findlay .....

Course: ..... Semantics .....

1. Please rate the following statements on the scale provided (feel free to give further comments below):

		Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly agree
a)	I prepared fully for each tutorial.	☐	☐	☐	☑	☐
b)	The tutor prepared fully for each tutorial.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☑
c)	The amount of work expected of me was reasonable.	☐	☐	☑	☐	☐
d)	I was given adequate and useful feedback.	☐	☐	☐	☑	☐

Comments

This course involved a decent amount of formal logical notation, which I had no prior experience with. I wish there had been more of an introduction to this at the start of the course since it was rather foundational knowledge.

2. Which aspects of the teaching did you find most engaging and helpful?

I found use of visuals to be very helpful, particularly tables. Also the creation of new example sentences to illustrate the relevant property (and prompting the student to come up with novel sentences as well)

3. What aspects of the teaching did you find less useful?

Discussing only the example sentences given in the literature rather than coming up with novel sentences to examine and test.
Also, the essay prompts seemed to me to be geared more toward literature review than independent analysis, but a recurring critique that I received was that my essays relied too much on summary.

4. Do you have any suggestions as to how teaching may be improved?

Brainstorming a couple novel sentences to illustrate the concept at hand prior to the tute, and better communicating expectations for summary vs. analysis through the essay prompt.

5. Any other comments?

Thank you for a lovely term!

Thank you!

Appendix D

Peer observation: lecturer's form

Name: Jamie Findlay Date: 11/5/17

Course: Linguistics

Title of session/paper: Prelims grammar – relative clauses

No. of students: ~20 Observer: Umberto Bongianino

1. What are your objectives for the session (both for yourself and for the students)?

There is a lot of material to cover in one session, so my main aim is for the students to come away not feeling overwhelmed. To aid with this, I aim to make the structure of the lecture clear, and to engage/with the students to keep them focussing. /interact

Even if students may not understand all of the details, I would like them to leave feeling like they could do, given additional reading/next week's lecture, rather than feeling it is a lost cause.

2. Areas on which you would welcome feedback.

Since this lecture contains a large amount of content, I am way of lapsing into a list~~style~~ style, so I would be keen to know how engaging/varied you find the lecture.

Clarity – of speech/delivery and of structure/argumentation – ~~are~~ is crucial, so this would also be an area I would appreciate feedback (I sometimes have a tendency to digress...).

3. Other comments or issues.

I am filling in for a colleague who is unable to attend this week, so the group is unfamiliar to me. I am also at the mercy of a syllabus I did not design, so there is little I can do about what I cover – feedback would be most useful with regard to how I cover it, therefore. Formal syntax is something a lot of students, especially since many are modern languages students with a literature background, find hard. It is crucial not to lose them in technical vocabulary etc.

1

Peer observation: observer's form

Name: UMBERTO BONGIANINO ..... Date: 12/5/17 .....

Name of lecturer: .... JAMIE FINDLAY .....

Title of session/paper: .. Prelim. Grammar - Relative clauses .....

Date of observation: .. 12/5/17 .....

1. What in your opinion went well in the session? Why?

The lecture went very well. The atmosphere was relaxed, the students clearly felt at ease and interacted with Jamie quite a lot, even asking questions during the lecture itself. The contents were clearly presented at the beginning. The lecture pace was regular and comfortable, very much in tune with the power point. Body language was communicative & reassuring.

2. What in your opinion could be improved or developed? How might this be achieved?

The power-point presentation was very clear and didactic, but also perhaps a bit impersonal and monotonous. Maybe one could have added small flaps to mark the different languages, or different colours for the different parts of the lecture etc. to "personalise" it. Also, in the part of the lecture dedicated to constraints on relativisation, I thought it was superfluous to ask students what they felt about each and every case ("is this acceptable?" "is this bad language?" "is this somewhere in between?")

3. Please comment on areas in which the lecturer invited feedback.

The "live style" was unavoidable, of course, but Jamie managed to keep the students' attention until the end with his informal tone, and even humour, maintaining at the same time a very professional demeanour. Structure, argumentation, transitions, etc. were all very clear. Timing was perfect. No digressions.

4. Do you have any other comments or feedback about the session?

Perhaps I would have used the microphone, not because of Jamie's voice, which was loud and clear, but because it keeps you tied to the lectern and prevents you from wandering around the flat too much.