

Philosophical Logic

LECTURE THREE | MICHAELMAS 2017

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Last week

- Lecture 1: **Necessity, Analyticity, and the A Priori**
- Lecture 2: **Reference, Description, and Rigid Designation**
- Lecture 3: **What Could ‘Meaning’ Mean?**
- Lecture 4: **Natural Language**
- Lecture 5: **Formal Translations**
- Lecture 6: **Conditionals**
- Lecture 7: **Deeper into ‘the’**
- Lecture 8: **Quantification and Existence**

Quiz!

Which of the following combinations are coherent options?



Quiz

Which of these are coherent options? Can you give examples?

- Analytic: Necessary: A posteriori
- Analytic: Necessary: A priori (All: 'Tom is Tom')
- Analytic: Contingent: A posteriori
- Analytic: Contingent: A priori
- Synthetic: Necessary: A posteriori (Kripke: 'Water is H₂O')
- ? Synthetic: Necessary: A priori (Kant: '2 + 4 = 6')
- Synthetic: Contingent: A posteriori (All: 'There are people in this room')
- Synthetic: Contingent: A priori (Kripke: 'The metre-rod in Paris is one metre long')

1m = the length of the standard meter rod in Paris



'The standard meter rod in Paris is one meter long'

What Could 'Meaning' Mean?





Donald J. Trump

@realDonaldTrump

Follow

Despite the constant negative press covfefe

RETWEETS

11,029

LIKES

13,430



12:06 AM - 31 May 2017

7.8K

11K

13K



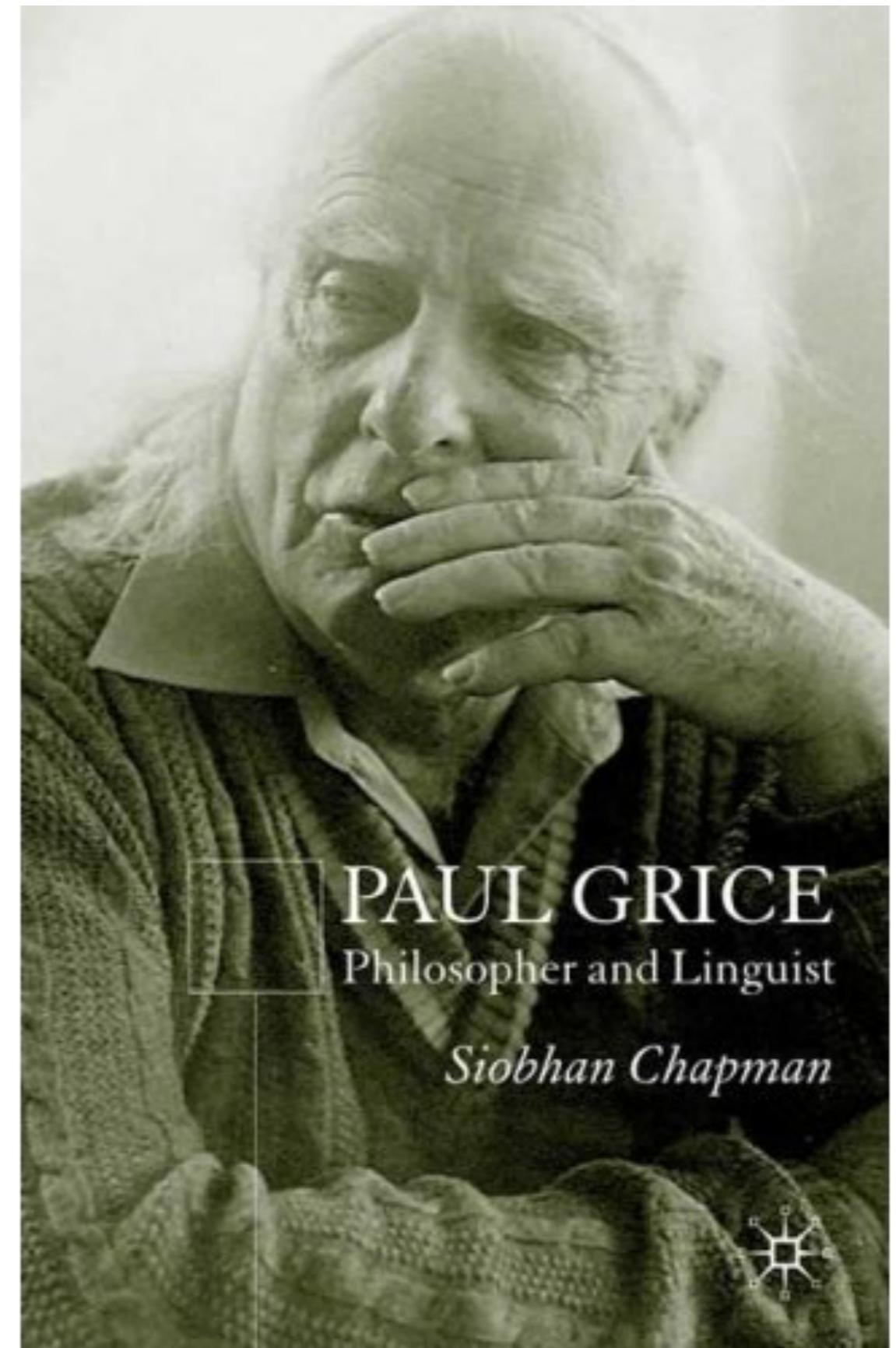
Two kinds of theoriesy of meaning

- **Foundational theory of meaning:** *In virtue of what does a sentence (or part of a sentence) have the meaning or meanings it has?*
- **Semantic theory of meaning:** *What is the meaning of this or that (part of a) sentence?*



H.P. Grice

‘Meaning’ (1957)
&
‘Logic and
Conversation’ (1975)



Speaker and Sentence Meaning

- 1. What did Trump mean when he wrote ‘Despite the constant negative press confefe’?
- 2. What does ‘Despite the constant negative press confefe’ mean?
- Distinguish between
(1) speaker meaning
and **(2) sentence meaning**





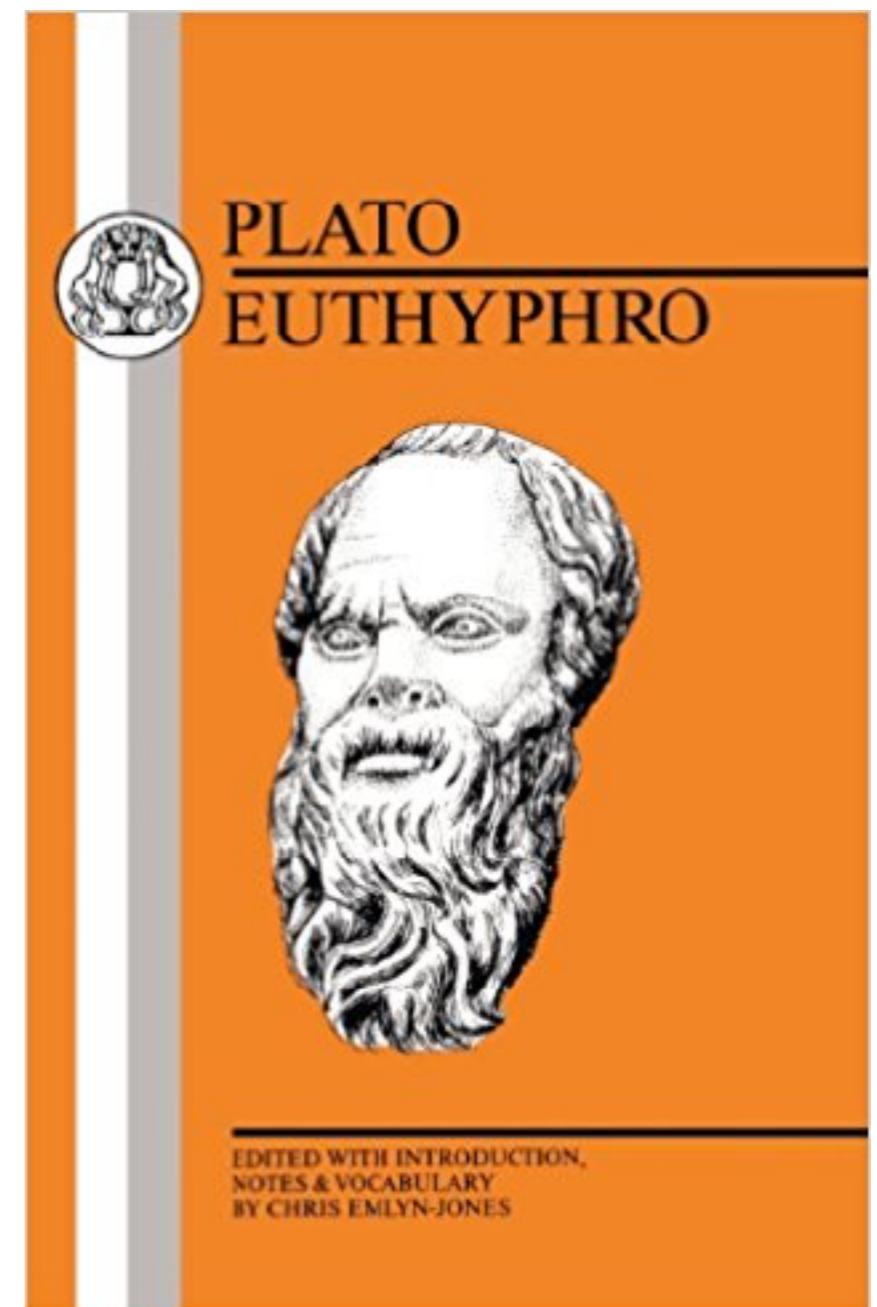
Which is more fundamental?

- What is the relation between sentence meaning and speaker meaning?
- **Answer A:** Sentence meaning explains speaker meaning
- **Answer B:** Speaker meaning explains sentence meaning



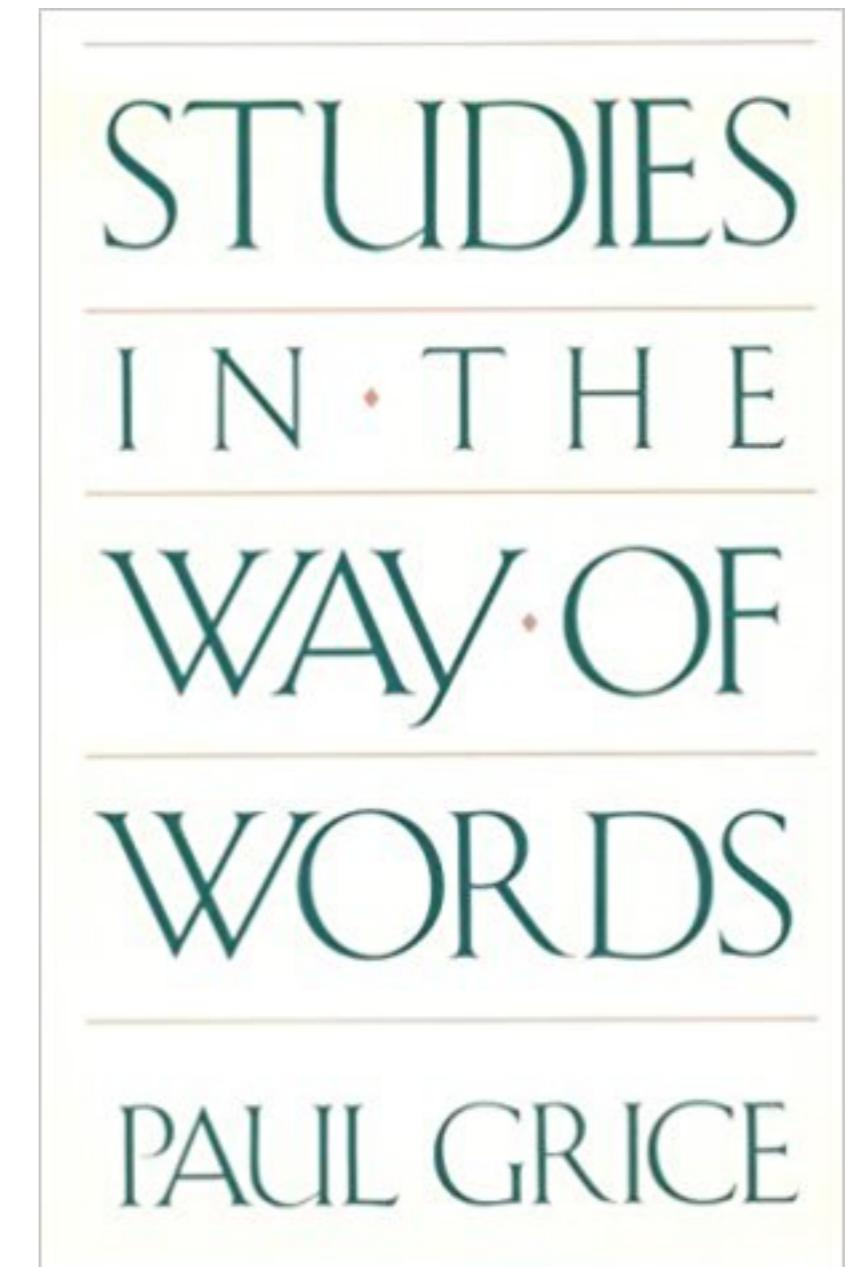
Explanatory priority

- "Is the pious ($\tauὸ\ ὁσιὸν$) loved by the gods because it is pious, or is it pious because it is loved by the gods?"
- (Does the sentence a speaker uses mean something because the speaker meant something, or does a speaker mean something because the sentence a speaker uses meant something?)



Gricean programme

- Grice: Foundational theory of meaning (though one that paves the way for a semantic theory as well)
- Grice: Speaker meaning explains sentence meaning (though not always directly: some meanings become conventional)
- Grice: Holds only for *nonnatural* meaning



Natural and Nonnatural meaning



Natural and Nonnatural

- Natural: “Those spots mean you have measles”
- Natural meaning is due to a causal connection between two phenomena (e.g. spots and measles, smoke and fire, etc.)
- Nonnatural: “The sound of the gong means that dinner’s over”
- Nonnatural is due to a communicative or conventional connection between two phenomena (e.g. sounding a gong and getting up from the dinner table)



Some tests to distinguish them

If such-and-such means P, then...	Natural	Nonnatural
1. If such-and-such, then P	YES	NO
2. We can talk about “what is meant by such-and- such”	NO	YES
3. Someone must have meant P	NO	YES
4. Such-and-such means 'P'	NO	YES
5. The fact that such-and- such means P	YES	NO

Grice on (nonnatural) meaning of sentences

- I. We can understand speaker meaning in terms of speaker intention;
- II. We can understand sentence meaning in terms of speaker meaning



Speaker meaning

- What are the necessary and sufficient conditions for a speaker A to mean_{nn} something by sentence s (on a particular occasion)?
- Grice's aim here is to capture the idea of a *communicative intention*.
- Imagine that, in the presence of Boris, Theresa utters:

“There will be a third runway.”



Theresa intends her utterance of “There will be a third runway.” to induce in Boris the belief that there will be a third runway.

CRIME SCENE DO NOT CROSS

**Theresa intends Boris to recognise the intention
behind her utterance of “There will be a third
runway.**



Necessary and jointly sufficient conditions

Theresa means_{nn} something by her utterance of
“There will be a third runway” iff:

- 1. Theresa **intends** her utterance of “There will be a third runway.” to induce in Boris the belief that there will be a third runway.
- 2. Theresa intends Boris to **recognise** the intention behind her utterance of “There will be a third runway.”
- 3. Theresa intends that Boris' recognition of her intention will play a part in his forming the belief that there will be a third runway.

Sentence meaning

- We can understand sentence meaning in terms of speaker meaning
- Grice: “ x meant something” is (roughly) equivalent to “Somebody meant_{nn} something by x .
- Grice: “ x means_{nn} (timeless) that so-and-so” might as a first shot be equated with some statement or disjunction of statements about what ‘people’ (vague) intend (with qualifications about “recognition”) to effect by x .



What is said
vs
What is implied

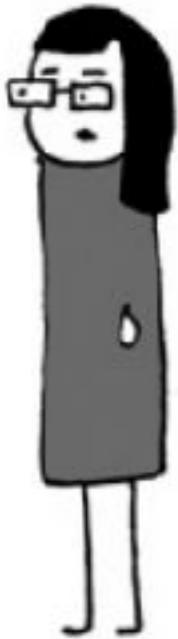


Implicature

- Grice ('Logic and Conversation') suggests that we distinguish between what we say and what we *imply*.
- (These are technical notions!)
- The central case of implicature arises because a speaker violates the ordinary norms of conversation.

WHEN I SAW
HOW MUCH IT
COST, MY HEAD
LITERALLY
EXPLODED!

YOU SEEM TO
HAVE HEALED
SURPRISINGLY
WELL.



Next week

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