

PHIL 332: Philosophy of Language
Class 14: Grice's Program for Meaning

1. Grice believed that we can and should do the following:
 - a. Account for *expression meaning* in terms of *speaker meaning*. I.e. account for what expression *e* means in terms of what speakers use *e* to mean.
 - b. Account for *speaker meaning* in terms of *speaker intentions*. I.e. account for what a speaker uses *e* to mean in terms of what the speaker intends.

Note: this presupposes that there is a difference between expression meaning and speaker meaning.

Speaker meaning

2. Grice wants a *reductive* account of speaker meaning. I.e. an account that does not itself appeal to speaker meaning.

Here is a non-reductive account: for a speaker to use *e* to mean *m* is for *m* to be what the speaker means by *e*.

3. Some reductive analyses from elsewhere:
 - a. For *S* to know that *p* is for *S* to have a justified true belief that *p*.
 - b. For *S* to be a bachelor is for *S* to be an unmarried male.
 - c. For *p* to be necessary is for *p* to be true in all possible worlds.
4. Note: we are *not* looking for accounts of the form "... iff ...", or "Necessarily, ... iff ...".
5. Note: we are looking for an account of the thing itself, not our concept of it. So 'conceptual analysis' is a bad description of the project.
6. Terminology: extensionally adequate; necessarily extensionally adequate, conceptually adequate, overgeneration, undergeneration.
7. How plausible is it that a reductive account of speaker meaning can be given?

After all, it seems that we can't even give a reductive account of what a chair is.
8. If a reductive account can be given, how plausible is it that it can be given in terms of intentions? (Remember: *e* can be sub-sentential.)