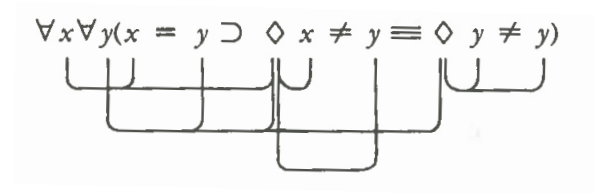


Opacity

Spring 2020, Syracuse University
Michael Rieppel



Course Description

Referential opacity is exhibited by a linguistic environment if the substitution of coreferring terms inside that environment can bring about a change in truth value. For example, while it is *a priori* knowable that Hesperus is Hesperus, it seems not to be *a priori* knowable that Phosphorus is Hesperus, so ‘it is *a priori* knowable that’ creates an opaque environment. On the face of it, opacity looks like it gives rise to failures of Leibniz’s Law, since e.g. Hesperus and Phosphorus are one and the same, but seem not to share the property of being *a priori* knowable to be identical to Hesperus. And Quine argued that quantifying into opaque environments is incoherent, and that quantified modal logic should be rejected. In this seminar, we will look at issues to do with opacity, Leibniz’s Law, and quantifying-in in different contexts, focusing on attitude reports and epistemic modals. We will begin by working through some of the classic literature by philosophers like Frege, Quine, and Kaplan, and then move on to more recent engagements with the topic.

In preparation for the first seminar meeting, please read Frege’s ‘On Sense and Reference’. (Available on Blackboard.)

Contact Information

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Course Requirements

The following is required of all seminar participants:

- Attendance, preparation, and participation in class discussions

- One question or critical comment posted to the discussion forum one day before the seminar.

Those enrolled for credit are also required to write a term paper of around 20 pages, due on the last day of class (with an outline due one month prior to that). Come speak with me within the first two weeks of the semester if you would prefer to write two shorter papers (minimally 10 pages each).

Schedule

Week of Jan 13:

Frege, G. (1892). 'On Sense and Reference'. In Geach, P. and Black, M., editors, *Translations from the Philosophical Writings of Gottlob Frege*, pages 56–78. Basil Blackwell, 1960

Week of Jan 20:

MLK Day, No Class

Week Jan 27:

Quine, W. V. (1953a). Reference and Modality. In *From a Logical Point of View*. Harvard University Press, 1980

Week of Feb 3:

Quine, W. V. (1956). Quantifiers and Propositional Attitudes. *The Journal of Philosophy*, 53(5):177 – 187

Kaplan, D. (1968). Quantifying In. *Synthese*, 19:178–214

Week of Feb 10:

Kripke, S. (1979). A Puzzle About Belief. In *Philosophical Troubles: Collected Papers Vol. I*, pages 125–161. Oxford University Press, 2011

Week of Feb 17:

Braun, D. (1998). Understanding Belief Reports. *The Philosophical Review*, 107(4):555–595

Week of Feb 24:

Metaphysics Search Day, No Class

Week of Mar 2:

Crimmins, M. and Perry, J. (1989). The Prince an the Phone Booth: Reporting Puzzling Beliefs. *The Journal of Philosophy*, 86(12):685–711

Bach, K. (1997). Do Belief Reports Report De Re Beliefs? *Pacific Philosophical Quarterly*, (78):215–241

Week of Mar 9:

Aloni, M. (2005). Individual Concepts in Modal Predicate Logic. *Journal of Philosophical Logic*, 34(1):1–64

Week of Mar 16:

Spring Break

Week of Mar 23:

Hawthorne, J. and Manley, D. (2012). *The Reference Book*. Oxford University Press

Week of Mar 30:

Cumming, S. (2008). Variabilism. *Philosophical Review*, 117(4):525–554

Week of Apr 6:

Yalcin, S. (2015b). Quantifying In From a Fregean Perspective. *Philosophical Review*, 124(2):207–253

Week of Apr 13:

Rieppel, M. (2017). Names, Masks, and Double Vision. *Ergo*, 4(8)

Week of Apr 20:

Ninan, D. (2018). Quantification and Epistemic Modality. *Philosophical Review*, 127(4):433–485

Week of Apr 27:

Rabern, B. (2018). Binding Bound Variables in Epistemic Contexts. *Inquiry*