

# EURO-XPRAG LONDON MASTER CLASS

## SCIENTIFIC REPORT

### Overview

The Masterclass was held at the University College London on May 28-29, 2013. Sessions from each of the lecturers took place on consecutive days.

13 students were selected in accordance with the quality of their curricula and their research interests. Euro-Xprag will provided them with full accommodation in London near the University.

Along with the Master class, a poster session took place for subsidized students coming to the event. The session was also open to any participant who wished to present a poster.

The event was organized by Richard Breheny, UCL, Division of Psychology and Language Sciences, Chandler House, 2 Wakefield Street, London WC1N 1PF, Telephone: +44 (0) 207 679 4039 (24039), r.breheny@ucl.ac.uk.

Invited Lecturers were:

Jesse Snedeker  
Department of Psychology  
Harvard University  
33 Kirkland Street  
Cambridge, MA 02138  
snedeker@wjh.harvard.edu

and

Daniel J. Grodner  
Assistant Professor  
Department of Psychology  
Swarthmore College  
500 College Avenue  
Swarthmore, PA 19081-1397  
dgrodne1@swarthmore.edu

## **Schedule**

All sessions took place in Chandler House except the poster session, which were be held in the basement atrium.

### **TUESDAY 28 MAY**

|               |                                    |
|---------------|------------------------------------|
| 9.30-11 am    | Dan Grodner                        |
| 11-11.30am    | Coffee                             |
| 11.30-12.30pm | Dan Grodner                        |
| 12.30-2pm     | Lunch                              |
| 2-3.30pm      | Jesse Snedeker                     |
| 3.30-4pm      | Coffee                             |
| 4-5pm         | Jesse Snedeker                     |
| 5-7pm         | Poster Session plus wine reception |

### **WEDNESDAY 29 MAY**

|               |                               |
|---------------|-------------------------------|
| 9.30-11 am    | Dan Grodner                   |
| 11-11.30am    | Coffee                        |
| 11.30-12.30pm | Dan Grodner                   |
| 12.30-2pm     | Lunch                         |
| 2-3.30pm      | Jesse Snedeker                |
| 3.30-4pm      | Coffee                        |
| 4-5pm         | Jesse Snedeker                |
| 5-7pm         | Roundtable Discussion         |
| 7.30pm        | Dinner at Caravan Kings Cross |

## **Evaluation**

The London Master Class received informal feedback indicating that this special Euro-Xprag event was very satisfactory for both students and researchers from the field.

## **Outlines: Dan Grodner**

### **DAY 1: IMPLICATURE, LANGUAGE COMPREHENSION, AND INTERACTIVITY**

#### **PART 1: WHERE DO IMPLICATURES COME FROM?**

The standard account of how perceivers recover implicit content is via a process of rational psychosocial inference: Perceivers appeal to a set of maxims to formulate a generative model of the speaker. I will describe a simple probabilistic model that follows from these assumptions and provide experimental evidence that supports it. I will also discuss how these ideas and findings relate to recently developed grammatical and game-theoretic approaches to implicature.

#### **PART 2: HOW ARE IMPLICATURES COMPUTED IN REAL TIME?**

I'll compare models of how implicatures are processed and critically review evidence from verification, visual world, reading time, and ERP. Two cautionary themes will be emphasized. First, pragmatic competence can be difficult to isolate from task performance. Thus, for any experimental task it's important to have an explicit linking hypothesis of how the cognitive process of interest influences overt behavior. Second, the clarity and salience of the speaker's communicative goals affects how quickly (and what kind of) pragmatic interpretations will arise.

### **DAY 2: PERSPECTIVE TAKING IN CONVERSATION**

Every linguistic act requires some consideration of the interlocutor's perspective, including their knowledge, goals, and perceptions. This ability is affected by cognitive, social, and possibly, cultural factors. I'll review theories and evidence of how perspective is processed during real time language comprehension and production.

## **Outlines: Jesse Snedeker**

### **DAY 1**

#### **PART 1. INCREMENTAL, INTERACTIVE AND PREDICTIVE: THE 21ST CENTURY STANDARD MODEL OF COGNITIVE PROCESSING**

Sixty years into the cognitive revolution, we have arrived at a consensus model of language comprehension that has four critical properties: 1) comprehension constructs a chain of representations which are partially ordered with respect to the perceptual input; 2) information transfer across levels is incremental; 3) the selection of representations at every level is interactive, drawing on information from other levels of representation including those further along in the chain; 4) predictions are made of upcoming representations on the basis of constraints established earlier in the utterance. Very similar models have emerged in other domains, most notably vision. To ensure that we are all on the same page, I will sketch out this model. In the hopes of maintaining your interest, I will use meaty examples (electrophysiology, embodied cognition, development of sentence processing).

#### **PART 2. RE-EXAMINING THE LITERATURE ON SCALAR IMPLICATURE IN LIGHT OF THE 21ST CENTURY STANDARD MODEL.**

I'll walk through the studies of the online processing of scalar implicature, considering the range of possible explanations that are possible under the standard model. The length of this section will depend on how thoroughly Dan has covered this ground. If we get ahead of ourselves, we can talk about presupposition.

### **DAY 2: NATURAL EXPERIMENTS IN DEVELOPMENT AND DISORDER**

Pragmatic processes are defined largely by what they are not (semantics or code processes). There is little reason to think that they form a coherent cognitive system. How can we begin to divide them up? One approach is to look at how they emerge over the course of development and how they break down in developmental disorders.

#### **PART 1: SCALAR IMPLICATURE AND THE INTERPRETATION OF NUMBER**

Several lines of research demonstrate that numbers do not behave like other scalar terms. Their upper-bounds appear to be calculated more frequently, more quickly, and with no apparent effort. We'll review this evidence and discuss several possible explanations, before considering the degree to which the developmental data constrain this debate.

#### **PART 2: PRAGMATIC AND PROSODIC PROCESSES IN HIGH-FUNCTIONING AUTISM**

Autism is characterized by deficits in communication and social reciprocity. Some folks on the autism spectrum seem to have no clear syntactic or lexical impairments. By exploring which aspects of pragmatic development are delayed or deviant in this population, we may get some insight into the internal structure of pragmatics. Systematic work in this area is relatively recent and autism is a complex disorder, but already theoretically constraining findings are emerging

## **Final list of participants**

|                              |  |
|------------------------------|--|
| Lewis Bott                   | Cardiff University                         |
| Bálint Forgács               | Central European University                |
| Alexandre Cremers            | ENS Paris                                  |
| Beate Bergmann               | Humboldt University of Berlin              |
| Sophia Döring                | Humboldt University of Berlin              |
| Susan Schweitzer             | Institut Jean Nicod                        |
| Simon Harrison               | La Sorbonne                                |
| Liz Smeets                   | McGill                                     |
| Dimitra Lazaridou-Chatzigoga | Queen Mary, University of London           |
| Linnaea Stockall             | Queen Mary, University of London           |
| Bob van Tiel Radboud         | University Nijmegen                        |
| Simona Di Paola              | Scuola Normale Superiore de Pisa           |
| Elif Azar                    | Tilburg University, Radboud University     |
| Emiel van den Hoven          | Tilburg University, Radboud University     |
| Andrea Santi                 | UCL  |
| Daniela Buehler              | UCL  |
| Deirdre Wilson               | UCL  |
| Diana Mazzarella             | UCL  |
| Felicity Deamer              | UCL  |
| Giulio Dulcinati             | UCL  |
| Irene Symeonidou             | UCL  |
| Isabelle Needham-Didsbury    | UCL  |
| Kevin Tang                   | UCL  |
| Kriszta Szendroi             | UCL  |
| Nausicaa Pouscoulous         | UCL  |
| Robyn Carston                | UCL  |
| Xiaobei Zheng                | UCL  |
| Ya-fang Lu                   | UCL  |
| Ye Tian                      | UCL  |
| Nino Grillo                  | UCL, CLUNL                                 |
| Francesca Foppolo            | Università degli Studi di Milano - Bicocca |
| Tim Kocher                   | Universität Duisburg-Essen                 |
| Elena Albu                   | University of Bucharest                    |
| Kyriakos Antoniou            | University of Cambridge                    |
| Napoleon Katsos              | University of Cambridge                    |
| Tasos Chatzikonstantinou     | University of Chicago                      |
| Heather Ferguson             | University of Kent                         |
| James Cane                   | University of Kent                         |
| Miriam Tresh                 | University of Kent                         |
| Cecile De Cat                | University of Leeds                        |
| Eleni Kapogiani              | University of Leeds                        |
| Haifa Alatawi                | University of Leeds                        |
| Larraitx Zubeldia            | University of the Basque Country           |
| Emiel van Miltenburg         | University of Utrecht                      |