

HANDBOOK OF PHILOSOPHICAL LOGIC

VOLUME IV

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HANDBOOK OF PHILOSOPHICAL LOGIC

*Volume IV:
Topics in the Philosophy of Language*

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PREFACE*

There is hardly any branch of philosophical logic that is not closely connected in one way or the other to issues in the semantics of natural languages. Historically as well, the philosophy of language and philosophical logic have been intertwined from the very beginning. In the last hundred years both mathematical logic and philosophical logic have matured into major disciplines and the ties to issues in the philosophy and the formal semantics of language are – it is fair to say – stronger than ever before.

The present volume of the *Handbook* attempts to survey some of, but by no means all, the central areas of the formal philosophy of language. The emphasis of the overviews in this volume is on the whole not so much on the exposition of particular theoretical approaches in semantics as on the presentation of problem areas that need to be taken into account in any full-fledged general semantic theory of natural language.

The first chapter in Volume IV is a comprehensive description of perhaps the (to date) most successful application of logical techniques to the semantics of natural language, namely, generalized quantifier theory. This very prominent interaction between logical and linguistic semantics is significant for several reasons. First, the formal semantics of natural language was profoundly marked by Richard Montague's work on quantification in the late sixties. Second, even though it is not surprising that it is in the study of quantification that modern logic would have much to contribute to the semantic analysis of natural language, a closer look at what are called 'quantifiers' here has revealed a much richer semantic structure than one would previously have expected on the basis of working in standard predicate logic systems. Third, the detailed study of quantifiers in natural language is of interest to many disciplines and it is likely that it will give rise to new research themes in all of these.

The next three chapters deal with various issues connected to problems of predication. Chapter IV.2 reviews arguments for introducing properties as primitive entities and discusses their role in a theory of predication couched in intensional logic. Chapter IV.3 complements the previous chapter in that it provides formal reconstructions of several (nominalistic,

conceptual, realist) theories of predication. Chapter IV.4 centers on an important class of expressions used for predication in connection with quantities: mass expressions. This chapter reviews the most well-known approaches to mass terms and the ontological proposals related to them.

In addition to quantification and predication, matters of reference have constituted the other overriding theme for semantic theories in both philosophical logic and the semantics of natural languages. Chapter IV.5 presents an overview of how the semantics of proper names and descriptions have been dealt with in recent theories of reference. Chapter IV.6 is concerned with the context-dependence of reference, in particular, with the semantics of indexical expressions.

The topic of Chapter IV.7 is related to predication as it surveys some of the central problems of ascribing propositional attitudes to agents. Chapter IV.8 deals with the analysis of the main temporal aspects of natural language utterances. Together these two chapters give a good indication of the intricate complexities that arise once modalities of one or the other sort enter on the semantic stage.

Chapter IV.9 deals with another well-known topic in philosophical logic: presupposition, an issue on the borderline of semantics and pragmatics. The volume closes with an extensive study of the Liar paradox and its many implications for the study of language (as for example, self-reference, truth concepts and truth definitions).

D. M. GABBAY
F. GUENTHNER

NOTE

*Due to circumstances beyond the control of the editors, this volume does not contain all the papers that were originally foreseen. We hope that we will be able to make a step towards a more complete coverage of applications of philosophical logic in the analysis of natural language in the near future.

A NOTE ON NOTATION

Writings in the field of philosophical logic abound with logical symbols and every writer seems to have avowed or non-avowed (strong) preferences for one or the other system of notation. It had at one point been our intention to adopt a completely uniform set of symbols and notational conventions for the *Handbook*. For various reasons, we have left the choice of minor bits of notation (e.g. sentential symbols and the like) to the particular authors, unifying only whenever confusion might arise. The reader is invited to translate whatever seems to go against his or her notational taste into his or her favorite variant.