Course Syllabus

Psychology 7/8503 (section 2)
Seminar in Experimental Psychology:
Pragmatics and Figurative Language
Spring 2006

Meeting times: Tuesdays & Thursdays, 9:40-11:05
227 Fedex Institute of Technology

Instructor:	Roger Kreuz
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Office hours:	Mondays, Tuesdays & Thursdays, 4-5, and by appointment

Text: Clark, H. H. (1992). *Arenas of language use*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

Format: The class meetings will primarily consist of student-led discussions of the readings. The discussion leader for each class will provide an overview of the readings and moderate a discussion of the issues.

Readings: For each class, there will be 35-50 pages of assigned readings. These journal articles and book chapters (except for the Clark book) will be made available to the discussion leaders by the instructor. It will be the leaders' responsibility to photocopy sets for the class and to make them available to their classmates in a timely way.

Evaluation: Students will be expected to function as discussion leaders about three times during the term. In addition, students will be required to write a 500-word commentary on the readings for each class, and to submit them to the instructor and the discussion leader. More details about the commentaries can be found at the end of the syllabus.

Topics and Readings

January 17: Orientation

- Introductions and discussion of format

- Selection of discussion leaders (free-for-all; no brawling, please)

January 19: Introduction to Pragmatics (Kreuz)

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January 24: Common Ground I (Gibson)

Clark, H. H., Marshall, C. R. (1981). Definite reference and mutual knowledge. In A. Joshio, B. Webber, & I. Sag (Eds.), *Elements of discourse understanding* (pp. 10-63). Cambridge: Cambridge University Press. [Chapter 1 (pp. 9-59) in Clark, 1992]

January 26: Common Ground II (Jeuniaux)

Clark, H. H., & Carlson, T. B. (1981). Context for comprehension. In J. Long & A. Baddeley (Eds.), *Attention and performance IX* (pp. 313-330). Hillsdale, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum. [Chapter 2 (pp. 60-77) in Clark, 1992]

Clark, H. H., Schreuder, R., & Buttrick, S. (1983). Common ground and the understanding of demonstrative reference. *Journal of Verbal Learning and Verbal Behavior, 22*, 245-258. [Chapter 3 (pp. 78-99) in Clark, 1992]

January 31 : Collaboration I (Gibson)

Clark, H. H., & Wilkes-Gibbs, D. (1986). Referring as a collaborative process. *Cognition, 22*, 1-39. [Chapter 4 (pp. 107-143) in Clark, 1992]

February 02: Collaboration II (Gibson)

Clark, H. H., & Schaefer, E. F. (1989). Contributing to discourse. *Cognitive Science, 13*, 359-394. [Chapter 5 (pp. 144-175) in Clark, 1992]

Schober, M. F., & Clark, H. H. (1989). Understanding by addressees and overhearers. *Cognitive Psychology, 21*, 211-232. [Chapter 6 (pp. 176-197) in Clark, 1992]

February 07: Audience Design (Ramsdell)

Clark, H. H., & Carlson, T. B. (1982). Hearers and speech acts. *Language, 58*, 332-373. [Chapter 7 (pp. 205-247) in Clark, 1992]

February 09: Overhearers (Dempsey)

Clark, H. H., & Schaefer, E. F. (1992). Dealing with overhearers. [Chapter 8 (pp. 248-274) in Clark, 1992]

Clark, H. H., & Schaefer, E. F. (1987). Concealing one's meaning from overhearers. *Journal of Memory and Language, 26*, 209-225. [Chapter 9 (pp. 275-297) in Clark, 1992]

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February 14: Coordination (Duran)

Clark, H. H., & Gerrig, R. J. (1983). Understanding old words with new meanings. *Journal of Verbal Learning and Verbal Behavior, 22*, 591-608. [Chapter 11 (pp. 341-365) in Clark, 1992]

Clark, H. H. (1991). Words, the world, and their possibilities. In G. Lockhead & J. Pomerantz (Eds.) *The perception of structure* (pp. 263-277). Washington, DC: APA. [Chapter 12 (pp. 366-380) in Clark, 1992]

February 16: Perspective Taking I (Dempsey)

Keysar, B. (1994). The illusory transparency of intention: Linguistic perspective taking in text. *Cognitive Psychology, 26*, 165-208.

February 21: Perspective Taking II (Dempsey)

Gerrig, R. J., Ohaeri, J. O., & Brennan, S. E. (2000). Illusory transparency revisited. *Discourse Processes, 29*, 137-159.

Keysar, B. (2000). The illusory transparency of intention: Does June understand what Mark means because he means it? *Discourse Processes, 29*, 161-172.

Gerrig, R. J., Brennan, S. E., & Ohaeri, J. O. (2000). What can we conclude from speakers behaving badly? *Discourse Processes, 29*, 173-178.

February 23: Speaker Meaning (Ramsdell)

Colston, H. L. (2002). Pragmatic justifications for nonliteral gratitude acknowledgments: "Oh sure, anytime." *Metaphor and Symbol, 17*, 205-226.

Hamblin, J. L., & Gibbs, R. W., Jr. (2003). Processing the meanings of what speakers say and implicate. *Discourse Processes, 35*, 59-80.

February 28: Politeness and Indirectness (Briner)

Aronsson, K., & Rundström, B. (1989). Cats, dogs, and sweets in the clinical negotiation of reality: On politeness and coherence in pediatric discourse. *Language and Society, 18*, 483-504.

Holtgraves, T. (1998). Interpersonal foundations of conversational indirectness. In S. R. Fussell & R. J. Kreuz (Eds.), *Social and cognitive approaches to interpersonal communication* (pp. 71-89). Mahwah, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum.

March 02: No class

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March 07, 09: ~~Independent fieldwork in pragmatics~~ **Spring Break**

March 14: Pragmatics and Paralinguistics (Jeuniaux)

Kelly, S. D., Barr, D. J., Church, R. B., and Lynch, K. (1999). Offering a hand to pragmatic understanding: The role of speech and gesture in comprehension and memory. *Journal of Memory and Language, 40*, 577-592.

Fox Tree, J. (2002). Interpreting pauses and ums at turn exchanges. *Discourse Processes, 34*, 37-75.

March 16: Introduction to Figurative Language (Kreuz)

March 21: Introduction to Metaphor (Caucci)

Ortony, A. (1979). Beyond literal similarity. *Psychological Review, 86*, 161-180.

Glucksberg, S., & Keysar, B. (1990). Understanding metaphorical comparisons: Beyond similarity. *Psychological Review, 97*, 3-18.

March 23: Metaphor Comprehension I (Briner)

McGlone, M. S. (1996). Conceptual metaphors and figurative language interpretation: Food for thought? *Journal of Memory and Language, 35*, 544-565.

Kintsch, W., & Bowles, A. R. (2002). Metaphor comprehension: What makes a metaphor difficult to understand? *Metaphor and Symbol, 17*, 249-262.

March 28: Metaphor Comprehension II (Caucci)

Bortfeld, H., & McGlone, M. S. (2001). The continuum of metaphor processing. *Metaphor and Symbol, 16*, 75-86.

Bowdle, B. F., & Gentner, D. (2005). The career of metaphor. *Psychological Review, 112*, 193-216.

March 30: Irony Processing (Duran)

Kumon-Nakamura, S., Glucksberg, S., & Brown, M. (1995). How about another piece of pie: The allusional pretense theory of discourse irony. Journal of Experimental Psychology: General, 124, 3-21.

Ivanko, S. L., & Pexman, P. M. (2003). Context incongruity and irony processing. *Discourse Processes, 35*, 241-279.

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April 04: Irony and Negation (Jeuniaux)

Giora, R. (1995). On irony and negation. *Discourse Processes, 19*, 239-264.

Giora, R., Balaban, N., Fein, O., & Alkabets, I. (2005). Negation as positivity in disguise. In H. L. Colston & A. N. Katz (Eds.), *Figurative language comprehension: Social and cultural influences* (pp. 233-258).

April 06: Ironic Criticism (Briner)

Colston, H. L. (1997). Salting a wound or sugaring a pill: The pragmatic functions of ironic criticism. *Discourse Processes, 23*, 24-45.

Pexman, P. M., & Olineck, K. (2002). Does sarcasm always sting? Investigating the impact of ironic insults and ironic compliments. *Discourse Processes, 33*, 199-217.

April 11: Irony and Spontaneous Speech (Caucci)

Gibbs, R. W., Jr. (2000). Irony in talk among friends. *Metaphor and Symbol, 15*, 5-27.

Bryant, G. A., & Fox Tree, J. E. (2002). Recognizing verbal irony in spontaneous speech. *Metaphor and Symbol, 17*, 99-117.

April 13: Irony and Metaphor (Gibson)

Katz, A. (1996). On interpreting statements as metaphor or irony: Contextual heuristics and cognitive consequences. In J. S. Mio & A. N. Katz (Eds.), *Metaphor: Implications and applications* (pp. 1-22). Mahwah, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum.

Colston, H. L., & Gibbs, R. W., Jr. (2002). Are irony and metaphor understood differently? *Metaphor and Symbol, 17*, 57-80.

April 18: Production of Figurative Language (Ramsdell)

Flor, M., & Hadar, U. (2005). The production of metaphoric expressions in spontaneous speech: A controlled-setting experiment. *Metaphor and Symbol, 20*, 1-34.

Hancock, J. T. (2004). Verbal irony use in face-to-face and computer-mediated conversations. *Journal of Language and Social Psychology, 23*, 447-463.

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April 20: Corpus-based Approaches (Duran)

Peters, W., & Wilks, Y. (2003). Data-driven detection of figurative language use in electronic language resources. *Metaphor and Symbol, 18*, 161-173.

Roncero, C., Kennedy, J. M., & Smyth, R. (in press). Similes on the internet have explanations. *Psychonomic Bulletin & Review*. 16 pages.

April 25: Irony and Children (Ramsdell)

Harris, M., & Pexman, P. M. (2003). Children's perceptions of the social functions of verbal irony. *Discourse Processes, 36*, 147-165.

Pexman, P. M., Glenwright, M., Hala, S., Kowbel, S. L., & Jungen, S. (2006). Children's use of trait information in understanding verbal irony. *Metaphor and Symbol, 21*, 39-60.

Some Notes on Being the Discussion Leader

Each of you will be in charge of the discussion about three times during the term. Obviously, you should be well prepared to discuss the issues at hand. I would advise you to read the paper(s) well in advance, and you may want to read some of articles that the authors cite. Of course, you should feel free to come and talk to me about any concerns you have. (You'll also have the incredibly insightful commentaries of your classmates to help you.) Your performance as discussion leader will constitute one half of your class grade.

Some Notes on the Commentaries

An important skill to learn is how to critically but fairly evaluate a research project, and then distill your thoughts into a coherent written document. To help you develop this skill, an important part of this course will be the writing of commentaries.

For each class, you will provide a written reaction to the reading(s). This commentary should be around 500 words, and it needs to be submitted to the instructor and the discussion leader at least 12 hours before each class (i.e., by 9:40 p.m. on Monday night for the Tuesday class, and by 9:40 p.m. on Wednesday night for the Thursday class). The commentaries should be submitted, via e-mail, as Word documents.

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The commentary should *not* be a summary of the paper's methodology and results: that's why the authors wrote an abstract. Instead, the commentary should focus on questions like the following:

• Does the article explore an important issue?

• Is the methodology appropriate for the question(s) being investigated?

• Are the statistics appropriate for the data?

• Do the authors' conclusions follow from the data presented? Are you convinced by their argument?

• Are there any alternative explanations for the results?

• Do the experiments have ecological validity?

• Is there a different or better methodology that the authors could have employed?

• Are there any limitations to generalizability?

• Was there anything that was confusing or unexplained?

• Did the authors employ unfamiliar terms or concepts?

• Was there anything noteworthy about the characteristics of the subjects (e.g., small sample size, skewed gender)?

• Was the paper well written and clearly organized?

• Did the authors use tables and figures appropriately? Redundantly? Haphazardly? Not at all?

(Potentially) Frequently Asked Questions

Q: Two commentaries a week!? That's a lot of work.

A: Yes, it is. But keep in mind that the course has no tests, and no other assignments. And the commentaries will become easier to write by the end of the term – I promise.

Q: I've written everything I can think of, but my commentary is only 437 words long. Am I a bad person?

A: Probably not. The 500 word length is simply a guideline; don't be too obsessed with this number. Some of your papers will be shorter, and others will be longer. However, if you're routinely writing 800 word commentaries, you should try to be more succinct. And if you're routinely writing 300 word missives, I'll probably notice (and not be impressed).

Q: If there are two readings for a given class, do I need to given them equal time in the commentary?

A: Nope. For whatever reason, you may have more to say about one paper than another. However, you should address at least some issues in each article.

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Q: My pet dog/cat/weasel just died, and I'm pretty broken up. Is it possible to skip the assignment if I can't bring myself to write?

A: Yes, I'll allow each of you to skip one commentary assignment during the term. However, if you skip more than that, you'll need to throw yourself on the mercy of the court. Keep in mind that I take these assignments pretty seriously, so don't expect too much sympathy.

Q: I was too hung over to write, so I didn't submit my paper until midnight (variants: my modem wasn't working, my hard drive died, the dog ate my paper).

A: I expect graduate students to be responsible, but sometimes life does hand you lemons. Please do everything you can to get the commentaries submitted on time. It makes the discussion leaders' job easier if they have your thoughts in a timely manner. And if any of you are consistently late, you'll be hearing from me.

Q: Will I get feedback on my commentaries from you?

A: Although I will read all the commentaries carefully, I'll only provide feedback if I spot problems (so, no news is good news).

Q: Do I need to write a commentary for the days when I'm a discussion leader?

A: No – you're off the hook for that class. That's one of the perks of being discussion leader.

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