The background of the slide is a composite image. On the right side, there is a complex network graph with numerous nodes of various colors (blue, red, orange, yellow, purple, black) and a dense web of grey lines connecting them. On the left side, there is a field of small, dark grey dots, resembling a starry sky or a sparse point cloud. A white rectangular box is positioned in the center-left, containing the title and author information.

# Tutorial – session 9

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Eva Sirlinger

# Agenda



Recap

Warm-up game

Introducing Semantics

Exercises

Time for Questions

# Recap

- What does valency mean?
- Which three levels do we use to analyse phrases?
- Which semantic roles do you know?
- What are the semantic roles of the underlined phrases in the following sentences?:

1. Tom cut the apple.



2. She is patting her cat.



3. Once upon a time, Shrek tried to find Fiona.



# Warm-up game

- The first person starts with either choosing one of the following sentences or making up their own sentence:

It is chocolate that I like, What she really cared about is her cats, My parents both love going to the cinema with me. Yesterday, I left.

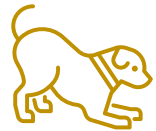
- Decide which part of that sentence is most important in your opinion.
- Then, say the sentence out loud and put the focus on what you think is most important (you can also change the sentence order)
- The others guess which part of the sentence you wanted to focus on.
- And so on 😊

# Semantics: the study of meaning



- Sentential semantics: the meaning of sentences
- The principle of compositionality: the meaning of a sentence is defined by its parts and how these are combined.

e.g. The dog chases the cat vs. The cat chases the dog.



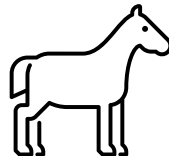
- When does the principle of compositionality not apply?

consider:

1. Mike and Tim found their friends in hiking boots.



2. I am as hungry as a horse!



- Sentences that are said to have the same meaning are paraphrases of each other → is it possible that they have exactly the same meaning?

consider: Jenny ate an apple. The apple was eaten by Jenny.

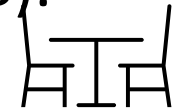
- The proposition of a sentence can either be true or false (truth conditions)

e.g. The earth is flat.



- Entailment: If A is true, B must also be true (A implies/entails B).

e.g. A) Jenny sells all kind of furniture. B) Jenny sells tables.



- Contradiction: If A is true, B must be false (A contradicts B).

A) Hannah is travelling in Australia. B) Hannah is travelling in Europe.

- Presupposition: things that must be presupposed to make sense of a sentence.

e.g. Tina has stopped riding horses. → the presupposition is that Tina was riding horses before.

- It-clefts: It was yesterday that I went for a walk.
- wh-clefts: When I was really fed up was when I had to learn about syntax.
- right dislocation: We had lots of fun, Jonas, Bob and I.
- Left dislocation: And Tom, he did that too.
- Topic: that's what the sentence is about
- Common ground: the knowledge that everyone in the conversation has
- Focus: can be anywhere in the sentence, can be syntactically or phonetically marked in English (in other languages also morphologically)
- [\(181\) How Do We Signal What's Important When We Talk? Information Structure - YouTube](#)

# Exercises

- Identify the presupposition in each of the following sentences:
  1. Daniel recently retired.
  2. Liam and Martina celebrated their 4<sup>th</sup> anniversary last month.
  3. Gina gave birth to her first baby yesterday.
  4. Not everyone in this room is being honest.
- What is the relation between the following sentences? (entailment, contradiction, paraphrasing)?:
  1. The cat ate the gold fish. - The gold fish was eaten by the cat.
  2. Susanna retired yesterday. – Susanna is not working anymore.
  3. Trees are brown and green. – Tress are blue and purple.



# Time for questions

