

PHIL/COMS/LING 2504-A

Language and Communication

Carleton University
Department of Philosophy

Term: Winter 2019
Meetings: Wednesday + Friday 8:35-9:55
Venue: SA416
Instructor: Eros Corazza
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Essay Deadline: Frist day of class after reading week

Exam: exam period (2h exam)

Course description

We shall begin by discussing some central topics of Frege's philosophy of language. The main topics discussed will be: Frege's sense/reference distinction, Frege's theory of thought, Frege's anti-psychologism and Frege's theory of demonstratives. To understand the importance of Frege's contribution we will focus on Dummett's interpretation.

We shall then discuss some central topics from Wittgenstein's *Philosophical Investigations* and the way they have been perceived within the philosophical community. Among these topics we shall discuss notions such as: language games, form of life, rule following, etc.

Finally, we shall look at the direct reference theory of proper names (Kripke, Donnellan, ...) and the direct reference theory of indexicals (Kaplan, Perry, ...). We shall pay particular attention to the notion of context and the way our linguistic interchange exploits it in order to single out objects of discourse. In so doing we shall see how direct reference deals with Frege's and Wittgenstein's conceptions of language.

Aims and Objectives

The module aims to provide a general introduction to the development of some key notions pertaining to the philosophy of language. To do so we shall focus on some of Frege's and Wittgenstein's influential works and the way they have been perceived by the analytic philosophical community.

Learning Outcomes

By the end of the module you should be able to:

- **Understand notions** such as: the sense/reference distinction, the linguistic turn, anti-psychologism, language game, rule following, etc. (see *Module Content* and *Topics to be Discussed*, for detailed information on the notions/topics we'll discuss).
- **Communication skills:** through essays writing and the feedback you will get on them you will further develop the capacity to present problems and propose solutions to them in a clear, precise and concise way. Through discussions you will also have the opportunity to develop the capacity to speak briefly and clearly on a given subject/problem, to ask questions and requests for clarification, and to contribute constructively to discussion.
- You will have lot of opportunities to **interact** with other students in discussing some of the issues we will be dealing with.

Requirements

It is mandatory to access CuLearn for this course.

Assignments

One short essay and a final (2 h.) exam

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| • Attendance | Weight: 10% |
| • Short Essay (1500 words maximum) | Weight: 40% |
| • Final exam (answer 2 questions out of 5) | Weight: 50% |

Due Assignment

- Short Essay: **First day of class after reading week**
- Final exam: **Exam Period (a 2 hours exam)**

Texts Recommended

In bold characters the texts you *must* read. The other texts mentioned are extremely helpful in understanding and appreciating the text you must read.

- All the books should be on the short loan reserve in the library
- The books should also be available to buy at **Haven Books** (Sunnyside) and Carleton Bookstore.

On Frege:

Martinich (ed.). 2012. The Philosophy of Language. Oxford UP

- Frege's 2 papers you have to read are also in:

Beaney, M. (ed.), 1997, *The Frege Reader*. Blackwell, “**On Sinn und Bedeutung**” (p.151-71) and “**Thought**” (p.325-345)

Dummett, M., 1973, *Frege Philosophy of Language*, Oxford UP, ch. 5, ch. 6, ch. 11

Dummett, M., 1981, *The Interpretation of Frege's Philosophy of Language*, Oxford UP, ch. 6, ch. 10

Dummett, M., 1993, *The Origins of Analytical Philosophy*, Harvard UP, ch. 2, ch. 4, ch. 10, ch. 13

Perry, J., 1977, “Frege on Demonstratives”, in Perry, J., 1994, *The Problem of the Essential Indexical*, Oxford UP, ch. 1

On Wittgenstein:

Wittgenstein, L. *Philosophical Investigations*, Blackwell

Marie McGinn, 1997, *Wittgenstein and the Philosophical Investigations*, Routledge

Backer, G.P. & Hacker, P.M.S, 1980, *Wittgenstein: Meaning and Understanding Vol. 1*, Blackwell

Backer, G.P. & Hacker, P.M.S, 1985, *Wittgenstein: Rules, Grammar and Necessity Vol. 2*, Blackwell

Hacker, P.M.S, 1990, *Wittgenstein: Meaning and Mind Vol. 3*, Blackwell

Kripke, S. 1982. *Wittgenstein on Rules and Private Language*. Blackwell

On Direct Reference:

Corazza, E., 2004, *Reflecting the Mind*, Oxford UP, Oxford

Kaplan, D., 1977, “Demonstratives”, in Almog, J. et als. (eds.), 1989, *Themes From Kaplan*, Oxford UP, pp. 481-563

Kaplan, D, 1989, "Afterthought", in Almog, J. et als. (eds.), 1989, *Themes From Kaplan*, Oxford UP, pp. 565-614

Perry, J., 2001/12, *Reference and Reflexivity*, CSLI Publications, Stanford

Essay Topics

You should write one essay of 1500 words (or 6 typewritten double-spaced pages) *maximum* on one of the following 3 questions:

1. Is the following inference valid?
Mary believes that Hesperus is a star
Hesperus is Phosphorus
So: Mary believes that Phosphorus is a star
Why?
2. What's the difference between Frege and Dummett's Frege?
3. Explain and evaluate Frege's anti-psychologism.

Topics to be discussed and suggestions for reading

One topic per week

1. Introduction: Terminological Remarks

2. Frege's Puzzles

Primary reading: Frege. "Sense and Reference"

Secondary reading: Dummett, *Frege Philosophy of Language*. ch. 5, ch. 6

3. Fregean Thoughts

Primary reading: Frege. "Thought"

Secondary reading: Dummett, *Frege Philosophy of Language*. ch. 11

4. Dummett's Frege

Primary reading: Dummett, *Frege Philosophy of Language*. ch. 5, ch. 6, ch. 11

Secondary reading: Dummett, *The Interpretation of Frege's Philosophy of Language*. ch. 6, ch. 10

5. Frege's Anti-Psychologism

Primary reading: Frege. "Thought"

Primary reading: Dummett. *The Origins of Analytical Philosophy*. ch. 2, ch. 4, ch. 10, ch. 13

6. The Sense/Reference Distinction Revisited

Primary reading: Perry. "Frege on Demonstratives"

Secondary reading: Kaplan. "Demonstratives"

7. Wittgenstein's Methodology, the Augustinian Conception of Language, and Language *qua* Institution

Primary reading: Wittgenstein. *Philosophical Investigations (part 1)*

Secondary reading: Backer & Hacker. *Wittgenstein: Meaning and Understanding*

Secondary reading: McGinn. *Wittgenstein and the Philosophical Investigations*

8. Ostensive Definitions, Indexicality, and the First Person

Primary reading: Wittgenstein. *Philosophical Investigations (part 1)*

Primary reading: Wittgenstein. *The Brown Book (first part)*

Secondary reading: Backer & Hacker. *Wittgenstein: Meaning and Understanding*

9. Meaning, Understanding, and Use

Primary reading: Wittgenstein. *Philosophical Investigations (part 1)*

Secondary reading: Backer & Hacker. *Wittgenstein: Meaning and Understanding*

Secondary reading: McGinn. *Wittgenstein and the Philosophical Investigations*

10. Following a Rule

Primary reading: Kripke. *Wittgenstein on Rules and Private Language*

Secondary reading: Backer & Hacker. *Wittgenstein: Rules, Grammar and Necessity*.

Secondary reading: McGinn. *Wittgenstein and the Philosophical Investigations*

11. The Private Language Argument and the Philosophy of Psychology

Primary reading: Wittgenstein. *Philosophical Investigations (part 2)*

Secondary reading: Kripke. *Wittgenstein on Rules and Private Language*

Secondary reading: Hacker. *Wittgenstein: Meaning and Mind*

12. Revision Class

Suggestions for Writing an Essay

Source: *Episteme Links*

<http://www.epistemelinks.com/index.aspx>

Cf. G. J Matthey:

<http://philosophy.ucdavis.edu/matthey/phi22n/paphints.html>

Don't bring in extraneous details about the context in which the works were written. Your paper assignments are focussed on a specific topic. Your paper must stick to that topic. For example, "Descartes was a philosopher who was born in France, lived in the Netherlands, and died in Sweden."

Do frame the nature of the philosophical problem clearly. For example, "Is it possible to demonstrate the existence of God using no other information except about what it is to be God?"

Don't go off on a tangent. "Some philosophers have tried to prove that God exists by claiming that the order of nature requires an intelligent designer. Others have thought that the world does not necessarily exist, and if so, then there must be a God which necessarily exists and explains why the world exists. The first kind of argument is called the 'argument from design' and the second kind is called the 'cosmological argument.'"

Do stick to the issues mentioned in the paper assignment.

Don't throw out opinions casually. Example. "How could anybody prove that God exists? That is the kind of things human beings are just incapable of knowing."

Do give reasons for any opinion you express. "Descartes claimed that there is a nature of God. But what evidence is there that there really is such a thing as a nature of God, rather than just a concept of God that we make up ourselves?"

Don't make undocumented claims about what any of the authors wrote.

Do back up your description of the philosopher's position by use of quotations from the text. Parenthetical page references to the text are sufficient in lieu of footnotes. For example, "According to Descartes, God has a nature and this nature includes existence. He claims that his idea of God's nature is different from a false idea he made up himself, like a four-sided figure that is not a square but is inscribed in a circle. 'For there are a great many ways in which I understand that this idea is not an invention that is dependent on my thought, but is an image of a true and immutable nature' (p. 47)."

Don't use the words of others without quotation. This is plagiarism, which is a punishable academic offence. Your reader will be watching out for plagiarism. One good way to recognize when you are plagiarizing is to notice any change of style, say some sentences which use a lot of words you do not use ordinarily, or whose grammatical structure is very different from your own.

Do use your own words to paraphrase what an author says.

Don't neglect to address all points in the paper topic in detail.

Do provide sufficient detail on all points, so that the grader can recognize your mastery of them.

Don't pad your paper or eliminate vital parts to get it to the suggested length.

Do write economically. Make the paper just long enough to complete the required tasks and no longer. If you deviate significantly from the suggested length, consider whether you have said too much or left something out.

Don't simply write down a bunch of logically unconnected statements or assertions. For example, "Descartes tried to prove that God exists in a couple of ways. Spinoza tried to do the same thing, but he did it differently. Descartes just makes a lot of things up, and Spinoza does too."

Do present the material in the form of arguments. One way of looking at an argument is as the defense of a conclusion by appeal to premises which are acceptable to anyone who considers them objectively, such as that it impossible to think of God except as existing. "From the fact that I cannot think of God except as existing, it follows that existence is inseparable form God, and that for this reason he really exists" (p. 46).

Don't use colloquial language to make a point. For example, "Descartes's second attempt to prove God's existence was totally lame."

Do use standard language.

Don't confuse technical language with ordinary language. For example, Descartes's use of 'nature' is sometimes different from ordinary uses, such as 'part of the earth that is not developed by humans.'

Do explain any technical terms when you introduce them. For example, "The 'ontological argument' is an attempt to prove that God exists simply from the definition, or nature, or idea of God."

LIST OF EXAM QUESTIONS:

You'll be asked to answer 2 (and only 2) questions out of 5 questions of the following list:

1. What's the difference between Frege and Dummett's Frege?
2. What is the difference between " $a = a$ " and " $a = b$ "? What is wrong with Frege's *Begriffsschrift* solution? How does it differ from the solution proposed in *Ueber Sinn and Bedeutung*?
3. "The verbal expression of pain replaces crying and does not describe it." (*PI*: § 244) Explain and discuss.
4. Explain and evaluate Kripke's and Donnellan's arguments against Frege's semantics.
5. "This was our paradox: no course of action could be determined by a rule, because every course of action can be made out to accord with the rule." (*PI*: § 201) Explain and discuss.
6. "To Imagine a language is to imagine a form of life." (*PI*, § 7) Explain and discuss.
7. "If a lion could talk, we could not understand him." (*PI*: pg. 223) Explain and discuss.
8. Why does Frege introduced the sense/reference distinction?
9. "It comes to this: only of a living human being and what resembles (behaves like) a living human being can one say: it has sensations; it sees, is blind, hears; is deaf; is conscious or unconscious." (*PI*: § 281) Explain and discuss.
10. Explain Frege's anti-psychologism.
11. How Frege's theory deal with belief-ascriptions?
12. "If God had looked into our minds he would not have been able to see there whom we were speaking of." (*PI*: pg. 217). Explain and discuss.
13. Following Frege: What are the main features of a thought? and: Why does it need to possess these features?
14. What are the merits and/or defaults of Wittgenstein's discussion of ostensive definitions?
15. "In logic we must reject all distinctions that are made from a purely psychological point of view." (Frege; 1979: p.142) Explain and discuss.
16. Can there be a private language.
17. Discuss the Augustinian picture.
18. " $a = a$ and $a = b$ are obviously statements of different cognitive value." (Frege: 1892) Explain and discuss.
19. "An 'inner process' stands in need of outward criteria." (*PI*: § 580). Explain and discuss.
20. "Philosophy, as we use the word, is a fight against the fascination which forms of expression exert on us." (*BB*: 27). Explain and discuss.

Department of Philosophy and Carleton University Policies (Fall/Winter 2018-19)

Assignments:

Unless specifically told otherwise by their instructors, students:

- Must not use a plastic or cardboard cover or paper clips.
- Must staple the paper (there is a stapler on the essay box).
- Must include the following on the first page: student name and number; course name and number; instructor's name.
- No assignments will be accepted after the last day for handing in term work – see dates below.
- Assignments handed in through the essay box (just inside the glass doors, Paterson Hall, Floor 3A) must be dropped into the box by **4:15** on a regular business day in order to be date-stamped with that day's date. Assignments handed in after 4:15 or on a non-business day will be stamped as having been handed in on the next business day.
- Students are required to keep copies of their assignments. If your paper is lost at any point, you will be considered not to have submitted it if you cannot produce a copy immediately on request.

Evaluation:

Standing in a course is determined by the course instructor subject to the approval of the Faculty Dean. This means that grades submitted by the instructor may be subject to revision. No grades are final until they have been approved by the Dean.

Deferrals for Final Exams:

If you miss a final examination (formally scheduled or take-home) because of circumstances beyond your control, you may apply for a deferral. You must apply within 3 working days after the scheduled date of your formally scheduled exam or within 3 working days after the due date of a take-home exam. Visit the Registrar's Office for more information:

<http://calendar.carleton.ca/undergrad/regulations/academicregulationsoftheuniversity/acadregsuniv2/#2.5>

Plagiarism:

It is the responsibility of each student to understand the meaning of 'plagiarism' as defined in the Undergraduate or Graduate Calendars, and to avoid both committing plagiarism and aiding or abetting plagiarism by other students.

<https://carleton.ca/registrar/academic-integrity/>

Academic Accommodation:

You may need special arrangements to meet your academic obligations during the term. For an accommodation request the processes are as follows:

If you have a documented disability requiring academic accommodations in this course, please contact the Paul Menton Centre for Students with Disabilities (PMC) at 613-520-6608 or pmc@carleton.ca for a formal evaluation or contact your PMC coordinator to send your instructor your Letter of Accommodation at the beginning of the term. You must also contact the PMC no later than two weeks before the first in-class scheduled test or exam requiring accommodation (if applicable). After requesting accommodation from PMC, meet with your instructor as soon as possible to ensure accommodation arrangements are made. carleton.ca/pmc

Pregnancy obligation: write to your professor with any requests for academic accommodation during the first two weeks of class, or as soon as possible after the need for accommodation is known to exist. For more details visit the Equity Services website: <http://www2.carleton.ca/equity/>

Religious obligation: write to your professor with any requests for academic accommodation during the first two weeks of class, or as soon as possible after the need for accommodation is known to exist. For more details visit the Equity Services website: <http://www2.carleton.ca/equity/>

Survivors of Sexual Violence: as a community, Carleton University is committed to maintaining a positive learning, working and living environment where sexual violence will not be tolerated, and its survivors are supported through academic accommodations as per Carleton's Sexual Violence Policy. For more information about the services available

at the university and to obtain information about sexual violence and/or support, visit: carleton.ca/sexual-violence-support

Accommodation for Student Activities: Carleton University recognizes the substantial benefits, both to the individual student and for the university, that result from a student participating in activities beyond the classroom experience. Reasonable accommodation must be provided to students who compete or perform at the national or international level. Please contact your instructor with any requests for academic accommodation during the first two weeks of class, or as soon as possible after the need for accommodation is known to exist.

<https://carleton.ca/senate/wp-content/uploads/Accommodation-for-Student-Activities-1.pdf>

For more information on academic accommodation, please contact the departmental administrator or visit: students.carleton.ca/course-outline

Important Dates:

Jan. 7	Classes begin.
Jan. 18	Last day for registration and course changes in the winter term.
Jan. 31	Last day for a full fee adjustment when withdrawing from winter term courses or from the winter portion of two-term courses. Withdrawals after this date will result in a permanent notation of WDN on the official transcript.
Feb. 18	Statutory holiday. University closed.
Feb. 18-22	Winter Break – no classes.
Mar. 26	Last day for summative tests or examinations, or formative tests or examinations totaling more than 15% of the final grade, in winter term or fall/winter courses before the official examination period.
Apr. 9	Last day of two-term and winter term classes. Last day for academic withdrawal from fall/winter and winter courses. Last day for handing in term work and the last day that can be specified by a course instructor as a due date for two-term and for winter term courses.
Apr. 12-27	Final examinations for winter term and two-term courses. Examinations are normally held all seven days of the week.
Apr. 19-21	Statutory holiday. University closed. No examinations take place.
Apr. 27	All take-home examinations are due on this day.

Addresses:

Department of Philosophy:	3A35 Paterson Hall www.carleton.ca/philosophy 520-2110
Registrar's Office:	300 Tory www.carleton.ca/registrar 520-3500
Academic Advising Centre:	302 Tory www.carleton.ca/academicadvising 520-7850
Writing Services:	4 th Floor, Library http://www.carleton.ca/csas/writing-services/ 520-3822
MacOdrum Library	http://www.library.carleton.ca/ 520-2735