Review of Truth-Conditional Pragmatics by FRANÇOIS RECANATI
(Oxford: OUP, pp. vii+324)

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Recanati's *Truth-Conditional Pragmatics* is a sequel to his *Literal Meaning*: the picture remains essentially the same, but the project gets clearer, broader and deeper. Truth- conditional pragmatics (TCP) is the view that the truth-conditional content of an utterance ('what is said' by the utterance) does not simply supervene on lexical meanings and contextual effects that are traceable to the linguistically produced material (e.g. contextual assignment of values to syntactically represented variables). Rather, truth-conditional content is partly determined by 'free' pragmatic effects, i.e. contextual effects that are not triggered by any syntactically represented constituent. Furthermore, and centrally, these pragmatic effects interact with composition, so that the truth-conditional content of a complex expression is not merely a function of the (pragmatics-independent) meanings of its constituents. Rather, it is a function of the 'modulated' senses of its constituent expressions—where the 'modulated sense' of *e* is its content *after* pragmatic effects have been accounted for.

The book interleaves theoretical chapters with specific case studies that detail the application of TCP to specific phenomena. The general aim is to establish that TCP allows remarkably simple and nuanced explanations of a large range of data: Recanati discusses adjectives (ch. 2), weather reports (3), scalar implicatures (5), context shift (6) and quotation (7 and 8). Many of the case studies, as well as some of the more theoretical chapters in the book, are expanded versions of essays that have independently appeared in print.

The case studies offer the best insight into the expressive potential of TCP. To provide a flavor of the book, I will extract two points from them. In chapter 3, which expands upon one of the pivotal arguments in Literal Meaning, Recanati rejects a standard treatment of:

(1)   It is raining.

According to this treatment, the meteorological predicate 'rain' carries an argument slot for a location (when an explicit value for this argument is not provided, it gets supplied by context). Against this view, Recanati argues that:

(i) it implies that every reading of (1) must be specific with respect to the location of the 'rain event'.

(ii) unspecific readings of (1) are nonetheless possible (in Recanati's well-known example: suppose that rain has been missing from the earth for a long time; when rain finally falls in some location, a weatherman utters (1) conveying not that it is raining at a particular location, but that a 'rain event' is taking place *somewhere on the earth*).

Recanati contends instead that 'rain' does not carry a location argument; a location can be optionally provided via free-enrichment. It is provided, for instance, when (1)'s intuitive truth-conditions involve the speaker's vicinities. It is not provided when 'rain' receives its broadest, location unspecific, interpretation.

As is well known, this argument faces a fairly decisive objection: in the weatherman example, a location *does* appear to be provided: it is a *broad* location—e.g. the entire earth—but a location nonetheless. Recanati tackles this objection head on and gives a response to it. Simplifying a bit (see pp. 108-110 for Recanati's discussion and references to the literature), the response is that appealing to 'broad' locations ('the whole earth') does not make weather predicates pattern with other predicates, such as *arrive*, that genuinely carry an argument slot for location. It is not possible, Recanati says, to give a 'broad' interpretation of the location argument in:

(2)   John has arrived.

I am not much moved by this response. First, a defender of the orthodox account can reply that the location argument of 'arrived' is constrained in ways in which the location argument for 'rain' is not. I do not find this more objectionable than saying that 'she' is constrained in ways in which 'that' is not. Second, I am unconvinced of Recanati's diagnostics concerning 'arrive': the need for a narrow location is supposedly required to make sense of the infelicity of this dialogue:

(3)   A: John has arrived.
        B: Where has he arrived?
        A: * I have no idea.

However, one can easily supply a context and a continuation to make the dialogue felicitous. Suppose that John is a drug smuggler. To protect himself from rival crime families, John keeps his location a secret—even to his bosses (among whom is A). Now imagine the dialogue in (3) and imagine that A's final line is "I have no idea, but the drugs will be sold by tomorrow".

The weatherman argument is also related to a general question I found unanswered in the book: what is the explanatory significance of lexical (i.e. pre-modulation) meanings? What block us from adopting a view—such as those recently defended independently by Peter Ludlow or Agustin Rayo—on which lexical meanings are extremely thin and *always* modulated? For Recanati, modulation is constitutively optional, but I cannot reconstruct based on the arguments in TCP a convincing, independently motivated, argument to this effect. The weatherman argument might initially be thought to point us to a non-modulated sense of 'rain'; but this turns out to not even be the case even under Recanati's own interpretation of the example. The second case study I want to highlight involves Recanati's application of TCP to recent arguments to the effect that the computation of certain scalar implicatures appears to be local rather than global. Consider:

(4)   Bill believes that there were four boys at the party.

The putative implicature of (4) is:

(5)   Bill believes that there were no more than four boys at the party.

This conflicts with the traditional Gricean picture, according to which implicatures are calculated *on the basis* of the proposition semantically expressed by (4), and after semantic composition has taken place. Given these data, some authors infer that scalar implicatures must be handled uniformly by non-pragmatic means.

Recanati argues that TCP allows (but does not require) us to say that these implicatures are produced by modulation. As such, they are thoroughly pragmatic even though they are computed locally. He also accepts that *some* scalar implicatures may be explained by syntactic and semantic mechanisms. However, he uses an example by Chierchia to rule out views that attempt to handle *all* scalar implicatures in non-pragmatic terms.

(6)   It was a two-course meal. But everyone who skipped the first or the second course enjoyed it more, for he wasn't too full to appreciate it.

The argument here is:

  (i) the scalar implicature of disjunction is present here and

  (ii) non-pragmatic accounts of scalar implicatures must predict it to be absent.

Since (ii) is tested against only one type of non-pragmatic account, this section felt like a missed opportunity. As Recanati acknowledges, since the publication

of the article underlying this chapter, Chierchia, Fox and Spector have developed an account in terms of an optional covert exhaustivity operator that accounts for (6). After citing this development, Recanati refers the reader to an earlier discussion of *covert optionals*. A covert optional is an operator that can be postulated to account in (canonically) compositional terms for the sorts of local variations in interpretation that appear to justify TCP. In that discussion, however, we are simply told that at the current stage, it is not clear how much difference there is between such accounts and TCP. Yet, it seems to me, they must be distinct: the former sticks to a traditional picture of compositionality and of the role of pragmatics; the latter doesn't. In my view, a more conclusive resolution of this debate was needed and would have constituted significant progress.

I have drawn attention to isolated sections of the book, but I should observe that, as a whole, *Truth-Conditional Pragmatics* is an extremely broad and detailed effort. Given its genesis as a collection of essays, its argumentative progression is remarkably transparent (at the same time, however, the book is not quite as cohesive as its predecessor). Its breadth will make it appealing to the experts and its clarity will make it accessible to those who are looking for an opinionated entry point into the debate on contextualism and linguistic meaning.

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