

TEMPORAL ANAPHORA IN TENSELESS LANGUAGES

Syllabus

INSTRUCTOR: Maria Bittner
e-mail: mbittner@rci.rutgers.edu
url: <http://www.rci.rutgers.edu/~mbittner>
office hour: M 11:30–12:30, SEM-203A.

WHEN & WHERE:
 Th 9:50 – 12:50, SEM-108, 18 Seminary Place.

PREREQUISITE:
Semantics 2, or permission of the instructor (who will require, e.g., familiarity with the logic of change of Muskens 1995.)

COURSE DESCRIPTION:
 Current theories of temporal anaphora (Kamp and Reyle 1993, Muskens 1995, etc) crucially rely on tense. However, some languages have no tense marking at all—e.g., Yukatek (Mayan, Bohnemeyer 2002), Kalaallisut (Inuit Eskimo, Shaer 2003, Bittner 2004a) and arguably Mohawk (Iroquoian, Baker & Travis 1997, Bittner 2004b text studies). How, then, does one talk in such a language about the past, present and, especially, the future? This seminar will attempt to answer this question, based not only on the available research but crucially also samples of actual texts.

REFERENCES:

- *Theoretical background*
- Kamp, H. and C. Rohrer. 1983. 'Tense in Texts'. In R. Bäuerle, ed., *Meaning, Use and Interpretation of Language*, 250–269. de Gruyter, Berlin.
- Lewis, D. 1979. 'Attitudes *De Dicto* and *De Se*.' *Philosophical Review* **88**:513–43.
- Moens, M. and M. Steedman. 1988. 'Temporal ontology and temporal reference'. *Computational Linguistics* **14**:15–28.
- Stone, M. 1997. 'The anaphoric parallel between modality and tense'. IRCS Report 97-06. University of Pennsylvania. <http://www.cs.rutgers.edu/~mdstone/compsem.html>
- Webber, B. 1988. 'Tense as discourse anaphor'. *Computational Linguistics* **14**:61–73.
- *Kalaallisut* (Eskimo-Aleut: Greenland)
- Bittner, M. *in press*. 'Future discourse in a tenseless language'. *Journal of Semantics*. <http://www.rci.rutgers.edu/~mbittner/ou.html>
- Bittner, M. *to appear*. 'Online Update: Quantified *de se* and polysynthesis'. In C. Barker and P. Jacobson, eds., *Direct Compositionality*. OUP. <http://www.rci.rutgers.edu/~mbittner/ou.html>
- Bittner, M. 2005a. 'Text studies: Online update for Kalaallisut texts'. <http://www.rci.rutgers.edu/~mbittner/kal2.html> ('A hunter's story')
- Fortescue, M. 1984. *West Greenlandic*. Croom Helm, London.
- Shaer, B. 2003. 'Toward a tenseless analysis of a tenseless language.' *Proceedings of SULA 2*, 139–56. GLSA, University of Massachusetts at Amherst.
- *Yukatek* (Mayan: Yukatán peninsula, Mexico)
- Bittner, M. 2005b. 'Text studies: Online update for Yukatek texts'. <http://www.rci.rutgers.edu/~mbittner/ym.html> ('Little rabbit in the cave')

Bohnenmeyer, J. 1998. *Time Relations in Discourse: Evidence from a Comparative Approach to Yukatek Maya*. Ph. D. thesis, Katholieke Universiteit Brabant.

Bohnenmeyer, J. 2002. *The Grammar of Time Reference in Yukatek Maya*. Lincom Europa, Munich.

• *Mohawk* (Iroquoian: New York, Quebec)

Baker, M. and L. Travis. 1997. 'Mood as verbal definiteness in a "tenseless" language'. *Natural Language Semantics* 5:213–269. <http://www.equinox.rutgers.edu/people/faculty/baker.html>

Baker, M. and L. Travis. 1998. 'Events, times and Mohawk verbal inflection.' *Canadian Journal of Linguistics* 43:149–203.

Bittner, M. 2004. 'Text studies: Online update for Mohawk texts'. <http://www.rci.rutgers.edu/~mbittner/mhk.html> ('The bear and the fox')

Bonvillain, N. 1973. *A Grammar of Akwesasne Mohawk*. Canadian Museum of Civilization.

Chafe, W. 1960. 'Seneca morphology II: Irreducible verbs and nouns; the modal verb.' *International Journal of American Linguistics* 26:123–29.

Foster, M. 1986. 'Updating the terminology of tense, mood, and aspect in Northern Iroquoian descriptions'. *International Journal of American Linguistics* 52:65–72.

Lounsbury, F. 1953. *Oneida Verb Morphology*. Yale University Publications in Anthropology, no 48. Yale University Press, New Haven.

REQUIREMENTS:

Research project on some possibly tenseless language, based on text samples other than those discussed in class and *preferably from another language family*. You may find suitable research material in descriptive grammars with text samples (and/or analyzed texts available online), such as those listed below. Possible research topics include, but are not limited to, the following:

- What is the required grammatical marking for verbs in this language? Tense? Aspect? Mood? Other? How does this marking function in discourse? Theory-neutral description.
- Tenselessness vs. relative tense (e.g., *Southern Paiute*—see grammar and texts by E. Sapir)
- Online update for further text samples and/or alternative analysis of texts analyzed in class.
- Analysis of some tenseless construction discussed in class and its counterpart in English that would generalize across both languages with as few adjustments as possible.
- Revision of some existing analysis of English in the light of evidence discussed in class. Of course, your new analysis should *also* be supported by English-internal evidence (i.e., don't pretend, e.g., that English is Kalaallisut, just because the reverse has been done.)

End of term *class presentation* plus a *term paper due* [whatever date we agree on]. **No late papers** and **no incompletes**.

(POSSIBLY) TENSELESS LANGUAGES: GRAMMARS AND TEXTS

- Aoki, H. 1979. *Nez Perce Grammar*. University of California Press.
- Aoki, H. & D. Walker. 1989. *Nez Perce Oral Narratives*. University of California Press.
- Bambose, A. 1966. *A Grammar of Yoruba*. Cambridge University Press, Cambridge.
- Bloomfield, L. 1917. *Tagalog Texts with Grammatical Analysis*. Urban University of Illinois.
- Nakayama, T. 2002. *Nuuchahnulth (Nootka) Morphosyntax*. University of California Press.
- Dahlstrom, A. *Plains Cree Morphosyntax*. Garland, New York.
- Dixon, R. 1972. *The Dyirbal Language of North Queensland*. Cambridge University Press, Cambridge.
- Dixon, R. 1988. *A Grammar of Bouma Fijian*. University of Chicago Press, Chicago.

- Donaldson, T. 1980. *Ngiyambaa. The Language of the Wangaaybuwan*. Cambridge University Press, Cambridge.
- Rice, K. 1989. *A Grammar of Slave*. Mouton de Gruyter, Amsterdam.
- Samarin, W. 1966. *The Gbeya language*. University of California Press, Berkeley.
- Suttles, W. 2004. *Musqueam Reference Grammar*. University of British Columbia Press.
- Valentine, R. and J. 2001. *Nishnaabemwin Reference Grammar*. University of Toronto Press.
- Bloomfield, L. 1991. *The Dog's Children: Anishinaabe Texts*. University of Manitoba Press.

TENTATIVE CLASS SCHEDULE

We will study the following topics in the indicated order. If we need more time at any point we'll take it, so we may not cover all of these topics. But hopefully we'll cover most of them.

TOPIC 1 (*week 1*). Introduction.

- Th 1/20. Temporal anaphora in *English*: Tense inflections and auxiliaries.
Read: Moens and Steedman 1988, Webber 1988, Stone 1997.

TOPIC 2 (*weeks 2–5*). Temporal anaphora in *Kalaallisut* (Eskimo-Aleut).

- Th 1/27. Introduction to Kalaallisut discourse. Informal theory-neutral description.
Read: Fortescue 1984:272–276, Shaer 2003, Bittner *in press*.
- Th 2/3. Formalization (1): Online update.
Read: Lewis 1979, Bittner *to appear*, Sec. 1–3.
- Th 2/10. Formalization (2): Kalaallisut episodics online.
Read: Bittner *to appear*, Sec. 4–5.
- Th 2/17. Formalization (3): Online reference to habits and prospects.
Read: Bittner *to appear*, Sec. 6–8.

TOPIC 3 (*weeks 6–8, 10*). Temporal anaphora in *Yukatek* (Mayan)

- Th 2/24. Introduction to Yukatek discourse. Informal theory-neutral description.
Read: Bohnemeyer 2002, ch. 1–2, 4.
- Th 3/3. Formalization (1): Non-future Yukatek discourse online.
Read: Bohnemeyer 2002, chs. 5
- Th 3/10. Formalization (2): Future Yukatek discourse online.
Read: Bohnemeyer 2002, ch. 6
- Th 3/17. SPRING BREAK (March 12–20)
- Th 3/24. Time in Yukatek: Anaphoric presupposition vs. conversational implicature.
Read: Bohnemeyer 1998, ch. 11.

TOPIC 4 (*weeks 11–13*). Temporal anaphora in *Mohawk* (Iroquoian).

- Th 3/31. Introduction to Mohawk discourse. Informal theory-neutral description.
Read: Foster 1986, Lounsbury 1953.
- Th 4/7. Formalization (1): Non-future Mohawk discourse online.
Read: Baker & Travis 1998, (Chafe 1970).
- Th 4/14. Formalization (2): Future Mohawk discourse online.
Read: Baker & Travis 1997

TOPIC 5 (*weeks 14–15*). Toward a crosslinguistic theory of temporal anaphora.

- Th 4/21. Temporal anaphora in *English* revisited.
Read: Kamp & Rohrer 1983, Kamp & Reyle 1993: Ch. 5
- T 4/28. Class presentations of student projects. ***Course evaluation.***