

Approaches to Parts and Wholes in Semantics

Advanced Course

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Handout 5

The Priority of the Whole 2: Expressions of Replacement

Expressions of replacements in English

Verbs of replacement *replace*, *exchange*

Instead-phrases: *instead of Mary*, the adverb *instead*

In place-phrases: *in your place*

1. The verb *replace*

The role of wholes for replacement:

Replace applies to an entity relative to a contextually given *structured whole*,

Kinds of structured wholes

Artefacts

- (1) a. John replaced the leg (of the table).

Structured spatial region

- (1) b. John replaced the picture on the wall.

Social institution

- (1) c. John replaced the chairman (of the company).

Planned event

- (1) d. John replaced the priest (for the ceremony).

Configurations of individuals with their alienable possessions:

- (1) e. John replaced his computer / his trainer / his glasses.

Replace targets structured wholes that come with a particular role or place – a *slot*
 replacement: exchange the *replacee* in the slot with a *replacer*.

Constraints on structured wholes:

- (2) a. ???John replaced the flower he had bought.
- b. ???John replaced the person speaking to his wife.
- c. ???John replaced the person that was spontaneously addressing the crowd.

Replacement can only target entities occupying slot within the given whole.

Replace cannot target the temporal or spatial location of the entity itself:

- (2) d. ??? John replaced the location of the company / the time of the event / the ceremony.

Reason:

Entities have a location in time and space, but that location does not occupy a slot within the entity.

Replace can target variable that fails to have a realization:

- (3) a. John replaced the missing screw.
- b. Hans hat die fehlende Schraube ersetzt.

The verb *exchange*

- (4) a. John exchanged the flower he had bought
 - b. John exchanged the missing screw.
 - (5) a. John exchanged his pen.
 - b. John replaced his pen. (suggests: because it was defective)
 - (6) a. John exchanged the overqualified employee.
 - b. John replaced the overqualified employee
 - (7) a. They exchanged information / documents.
 - b. ??? They replaced information / documents.
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2. *Instead*-phrases

Syntax of *instead*-phrases: take nominal complements (NPs, APs, gerunds)

Two constructions with *instead*-phrases:

2.1. Constituent-based *instead*-phrases

Instead-phrase relates to particular constituents in the sentences by *association with focus*:

- (8) a. Instead of *Mary*, Bill met *Sue*.

- *Instead*-phrase applies to a structured whole that is a *structured proposition* or *state of affairs* expressed by the sentence

- Conveys replacement of entities that would fill the slots in that proposition that syntactically correspond to the focused constituents;

Alternative condition: the replacee will have to come from the focus-semantic value of the replacer

With *instead*-phrases, the replacer need not be an object, but can be

- a higher-order semantic value, e.g., a quantifier:

(8) b. Instead of a *man* the firm hired a *woman*.

- a relation:

(8) c. Instead of *running*, John *walked* to the house.

d. Instead of *over* the house, the bird flew *into* the house.

- several entities, relating to distinct positions in the structured proposition at once, e.g., with gapping:

(8) d. Instead of giving *John a book*, Mary gave *Bill a pen*.

Unlike the verb replace, *instead*-phrases may convey replacement of spatial and temporal locations:

(9) a. Instead of *Monday*, they arrived *Tuesday*.

b. Instead of in the *garden*, they celebrated in the *house*.

Reason:

Temporal and spatial locations when conveyed by adverbials occupy places in a structured proposition just like individuals.

2.2. Situation-based instead-phrases

Instead-phrase relates to a situation that is entirely given by the context:

(10) a. Instead of raining, it snowed.

b. Instead people dancing in the street, there was silence everywhere.

c. Instead of John praising himself, Joe criticized Mary.

Background situation consists of circumstances in which an event is expected to occur but does not, and in which alternative event does occur

Thus, a situation containing a slot for an event.

Instead-sentences seem restricted to event descriptions:

(11) a. ??? Instead of knowing / speaking French, John knows / speaks Spanish.

- b. Instead of speaking French, John spoke Spanish during the meeting.

2.3. The anaphoric adverb *instead*

Instead without complement: anaphoric *instead*

1. when associating with focus:

relates anaphorically to the replacee in a preceding negative sentence:

- (12) a. Bill did not meet *Mary*. *Instead*, he met *Sue*.
 b. The firm should have hired a *woman*. *Instead*, it hired a *man*.
 c. John did not *run* to the use. *Instead*, he *walked* to the house
 d. The bird did not fly *over* the house. *Instead*, it flew *into* the house.
 e. Mary did not give *John a book*. *Instead*, she gave *Bill a pen*.

Condition of anaphoric *instead* more precisely:

Preceding sentence *S'* must entail or implicate the negation of what *S* describes applied to the replacee rather than the replacer.

2. when not associating with focus:

Instead requires the preceding sentence to entail or implicate the negation of *S'*:

- (13) a. It should have rained. *Instead*, it snowed.
 b. People did not dance in the street. *Instead*, there was silence everywhere.
 c. John did not praise himself. *Instead*, Joe criticized Mary.
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3. *Place*-NPs

Place-phrases can act like *instead*-phrases, but come with a counterfactual conditional force:

- (14) a. In your place, I would have declined the offer.
 b. ??In your place, the company would have hired Bill.

Place-NPs make reference to a slot in a contextually given, counterfactual situation.

Connection between antecedent and consequent must be established on the basis of empathy or simulation (putting oneself into the shoes of another, e.g. the addressee).

Place-NPs are equivalent to the antecedent of empathetic conditionals:

- (15) If I were you, I would have declined the offer.

‘You’ refers to the addressee as someone in a particular slot in the relevant contextually given situation

(14a) makes overt reference to a slot in a situation (occupied by the addressee)

(15) makes implicit reference to a slot in a situation.

4. Toward a unified semantics of replacement constructions

PLACE as a light noun -- manifestations as *place, stead, Stelle, statt, lieu, ...*

- occurs explicitly or implicitly in all replacement constructions
- stands for slots within a structured whole, on its derivative meaning (originally just a subregion of a given region)

PART: also stands for a slot – as part of a whole th which explicit reference is made.

PLACE stands for a slot, as part of a background whole / region.

A slot-based semantics of replacement constructions:

Structured whole with slots in the case of *replace*

A contextually given entity (planned event, organization, artefact, region).

Structured whole with slots in the case of *instead*

The structured proposition expressed by the sentence (that is modified) or a contextually given situation.

In all cases, the slot of the replacee and replacer is defined in terms of functions within the whole, e.g., a thematic role for an event or relations that make up a structured proposition or situation.

Using slot mereology (Bennett 2013)

Events, institutions, artefacts, regions, contextually given situations, and structured propositions come with slots

Part relation relativized to a slot, as well as a time and a world:

For an entity x and a slot s of a whole y , ‘ $P^{w,t}(s)xy$ ’ means ‘ x is a part of y occupying s at t in w ’.

The semantics of replacement expressions (sketch):

The verb *replace*

(16) For objects d and d' , an event e , a structured whole b with a slot s occupied by d at the initial time of e , for an agent a ,

if $[replace\ with]^{w,t}(e, a, d, d', b) = 1$, then as a result of e , $P^{w,t}(s)d'b$.

Instead-phrases

(17) a. *Instead-phrases* with association with focus:

For a sentence S with focused constituent X , expressing a structured proposition p with a slot occupied by X ,

$[instead\ of\ X', S]^{w,t} = 1$ iff $[S]^{w,t} = 1$

provided $P^{w',t}(s)[X']p$ for every world w' in the common ground.

b. *Instead-phrases* without association with focus

For a contextually given situation c with a slot s for an event,

$[instead\ of\ S', S]^{w,t} = 1$ iff there is an actual event e that is a truthmaker of S and

$P^{w,t}(s)ec$, provided there is an event e' such that for any world w' in the common ground, $P^{w',t}(s)e'c$.

Anaphoric instead

involves anaphoric reference to the replacee.

Place-phrases

involve contextually given situations (with slots) serving in the antecedent of a conditional.

General important point about the semantics

Unified notion of a structured whole with slots applies to both

1. Ordinary objects: objects of reference in our language-independent ontology
2. Semantic objects: objects that play a role only in the context of compositional semantics, e.g., compositionally obtained structured propositions (states of affairs) or pragmatically obtained situations.

Reference

Bennett, K. (2013): 'Having a part twice over'. *The Australasian Journal of Philosophy* 91, 83-103