1. Observation

(1) a. Which colours do you like most? (minimally: $\exists xPx$)  
    b. Blue... [with final rise]  

Readings (a.o.):
I. Not sure if I really like blue that much. (Gunlogson)  
II. Should I have said ‘aquamarine’ instead?  
III. Did I pronounce ‘blue’ correctly?  
IV. Not sure about the other colours. (Constant)

2. Aims of this poster

I claim that a final rise conveys uncertain cooperativity (the latter à la Grice).
- Reading $I = $ uncertain Quality  
- Reading $II = $ uncertain Quantity  
- Reading $III = $ uncertain Manner  
- Reading $IV = $ uncertain Relevance

I will derive reading $IV$ based on:
- attentive/inquisitive semantics (Roelofsen);  
- relevance as context-relative entailment (Roberts);  
- previous work on exhaustivity implicatures (Westera).

I leave readings $I$-$III$ to intuition.

3. Notation

- $A, B$: meanings, i.e., sets of sets of worlds.  
- $s, t$: information states, i.e., sets of worlds  
- $w$: a world.  
- $A_s = \{ a \cap s \mid a \in A \}$: $A$ restricted to $s$.  
- $\vdash$: entailment.  
- $[\varphi]$: the meaning of sentence $\varphi$.

4. Ingredients (Westera, 2013)

Relevance is world-dependent (non-logical):
- $B$ is relevant to $A$ in $w$ iff for some $t, w \in t, B t \vdash A$.  
- An agent with knowledge state $s$ knows how $B$ is relevant to $A$ iff $B t \vdash A$.

Maxim of Relevance: know your utterance is relevant to the question under discussion (cf. Roberts).

Intuitive example:
(2) a. Will John go to the party?  
    b. It’s raining. $\sim$ John $\{hates/loves\}$ rainy parties.

The richer the semantics, the stricter this maxim.
- Attentive semantics models the possibilities a sentence draws attention to (Roelofsen).  
- $B \vdash A$ if $B \subseteq A$ (info) and $B \vdash A_B$ (attentive).  
- Now (1b) $\not\vdash$ (1a), because $[Pb] \not\vdash [\exists xPx]_{[pt]}$.

5. Predictions

Fact: (1b) complies with the Maxim of Relation iff for all $c \neq b$, the speaker believes $Pb \rightarrow Pc$ or $Pb \rightarrow \neg Pc$.

For (1), without its final rise, we would get (Westera):
1. The speaker believes that $Pb$ (Quality)  
2. $\forall c \neq b$, she lacks the belief that $Pc$ (Quantity)  
3. $\forall c \neq b$, she believes $Pb \rightarrow Pc$ or $Pb \rightarrow \neg Pc$ (Relation)  
4. $\forall c \neq b$, she believes $\neg Pc$ = exhaustivity!

But with its rise, conveying uncertain relevance, we get:
1. The speaker believes that $Pb$ (Quality)  
2. $\forall c \neq b$, she lacks the belief that $Pc$ (Quantity)  
3. $\forall c \neq b$, she’s unsure whether $Pb \rightarrow (\neg)Pc$ (final rise)  
4. $\forall c \neq b$, she’s unsure whether $Pc$ = reading $IV$!

6. Conclusions

- Final fall/rise conveys certain/uncertain cooperativity.  
- Reading $IV$ arises from semantics-pragmatics interplay.  
- Pragmatics is sensitive to attentiveness (cf. Ciardelli).  
- Pragmatic notions (e.g., ‘relevance’) enter semantics.

A. Available upon request (please ask!)

1. A recent handout with formal details and pictures.  
2. Contextual entailment of Roberts is too strong.  
3. ‘Within a world, everything is related.’  
4. The focus in rise-fall-rise makes quantity/relevance readings more salient (cf. Constant).  
5. Perhaps not all final rises are the same (but so what).  
6. Bonus: implicatures are not (explicitly) cancellable.

B. References


C. Acknowledgements

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