

Stop thinking! Discourse particles block your mind

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ILLC-Day 2: Language

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1. “Eigentlich” in update semantics
2. Cooperative communication and semantic enrichment
3. Avoiding semantic enrichment
4. Outlook

“Eigentlich” in update semantics

Disagreement on the meaning of “eigentlich”:

- “Eigentlich” marks the most relevant, very important, essential.
(*strictly speaking*)
- “Eigentlich” marks the not so relevant, less important. It makes an utterance casual, even half-hearted.
(*actually, by the way*)

Hypothesis: “Eigentlich” does not change the truth-conditions of a sentence but is used to block default conclusions that might otherwise be drawn by the hearer.

(1) **A:** We want to go swimming. Will you come with us?

B: Ich muss meinen Artikel fertig schreiben.

(I have to finish my paper.)

B': Eigentlich muss ich meinen Artikel fertig schreiben.

(Eigentlich, I have to finish my paper.)

Default rule: If someone has to finish a paper, then he normally will not go swimming. ($p \rightsquigarrow q$)

(2) 1 If it is raining, the temperature is normally below 15°C.

$$(p \rightsquigarrow r)$$

2 If there happens to be an easterly wind, the temperature is normally 15°C or higher.

$$(q \rightsquigarrow \neg r)$$

3 It is raining. (p)

4 There happens to be an easterly wind. (q)

5 It is raining, and there happens to be an easterly wind. ($p \wedge q$)

- 6** Eigentlich regnet es. (*eigentlich*(p))
(Eigentlich, it is raining.)
- 7** Eigentlich regnet es, aber der Wind weht von Osten.
(*eigentlich*(p) \wedge q)
(Eigentlich, it is raining, but there happens to be an easterly wind.)
- 8** Eigentlich weht der Wind von Osten. (*eigentlich*(q))
(Eigentlich, there happens to be an easterly wind.)
- 9** Eigentlich weht der Wind von Osten, aber es regnet.
(*eigentlich*(q) \wedge p)
(Eigentlich, there happens to be an easterly wind, but it is raining.)

For any proposition p , $eigentlich(p)$ entails p .

$Eigentlich(p)$ does not change the knowledge of some default rule $p \rightsquigarrow q$.

The sentences p and $eigentlich(p)$ are true under the same circumstances, i.e. they have the same propositional meaning. But $eigentlich(p)$ and p differ in their information update potential. An update with $eigentlich(p)$ blocks defaults from applying in the resulting information state. It avoids semantic conclusions to be drawn by the hearer.

The effects of “eigentlich” vs the effects of “aber”:

- (3) Eigentlich regnet es, aber der Wind weht von Osten.
(Eigentlich, it is raining, but there happens to be an easterly wind.)
- (4) Eigentlich weht der Wind von Osten, aber es regnet.
(Eigentlich, there happens to be an easterly wind, but it is raining.)
- (5) Es regnet, aber der Wind weht von Osten.
(It is raining, but there happens to be an easterly wind.)
- (6) Der Wind weht von Osten, aber es regnet.
(There happens to be an easterly wind, but it is raining.)

- (7) Eigentlich regnet es, aber der Wind weht von Osten.
(Eigentlich, it is raining, but there happens to be an easterly wind.)
- (8) Es regnet, aber der Wind weht von Osten.
(It is raining, but there happens to be an easterly wind.)
- (9) Es regnet, aber eigentlich weht der Wind von Osten.
(It is raining, but eigentlich there happens to be an easterly wind.)
- (10) Eigentlich regnet es. – Es regnet.
(Eigentlich, it is raining. – It is raining.)

Cooperative communication and semantic enrichment

(11) It is raining. \Rightarrow_{se} It is raining here, in Amsterdam, ...

(12) Entrance. \Rightarrow_{se} This door is the entrance to ...

(13) Who came to the party? — John.

\Rightarrow_{se} (Only) John came to the party.

(14) Will you come to the party? — I have to finish my paper.

\Rightarrow_{se} No, I will not come to the party.

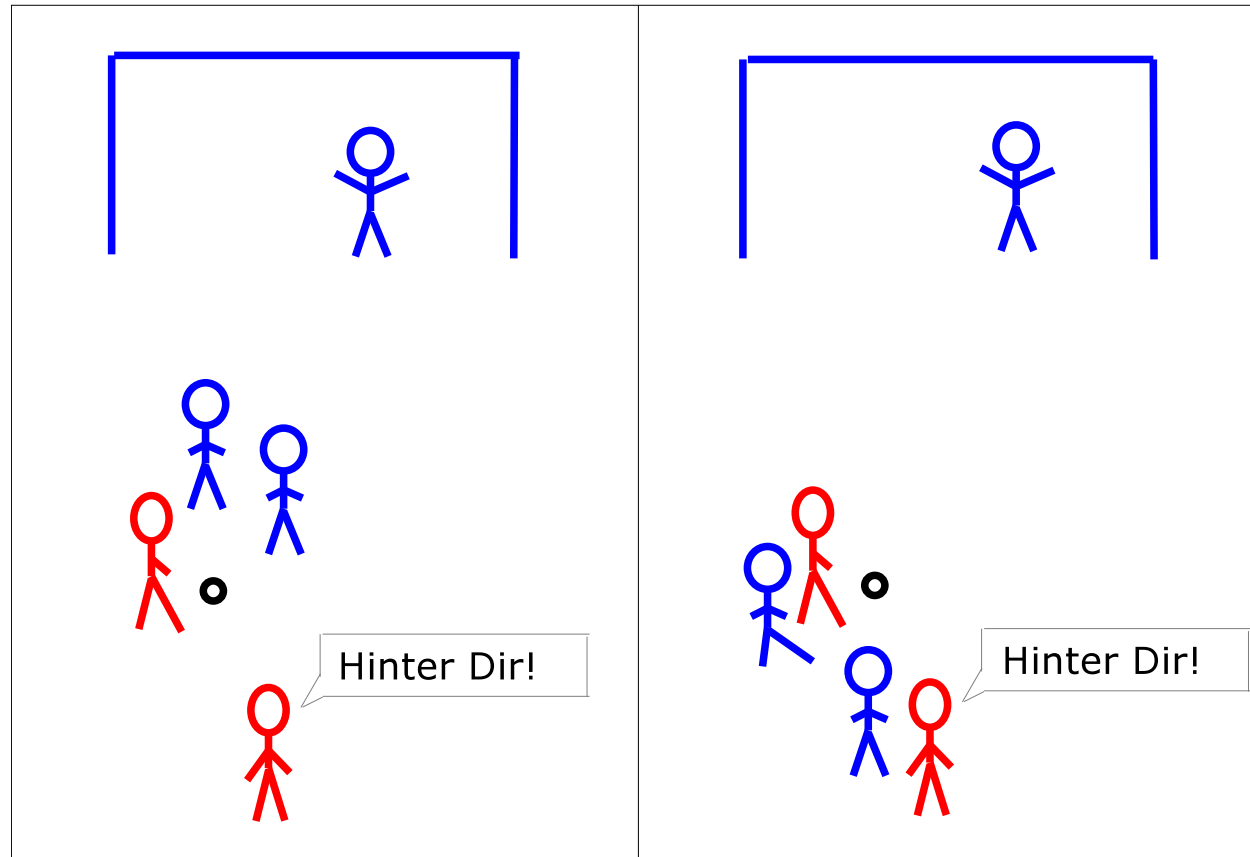


Figure 1: football, cooperative utterance

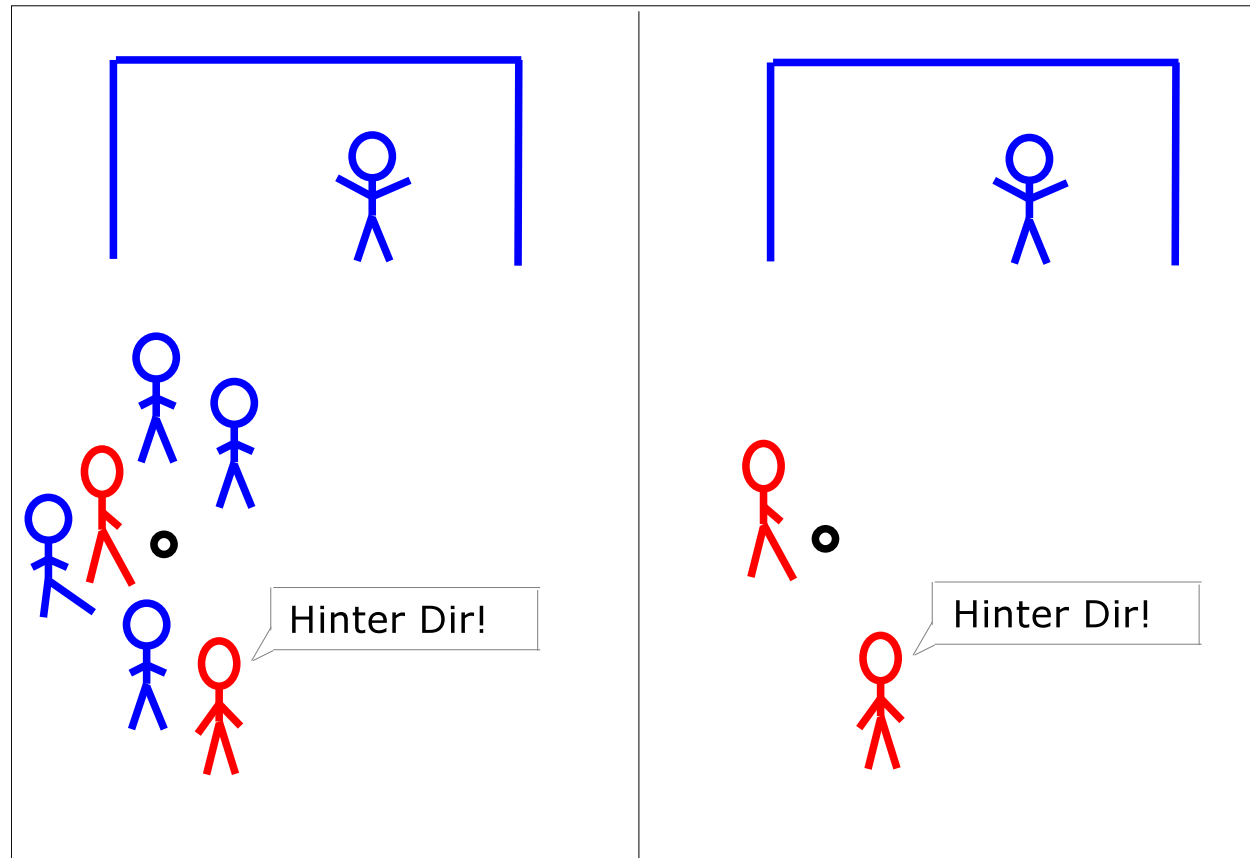


Figure 2: football, not so cooperative utterance

(15) What time is it? — It is 18:03h, but my watch is 3 minutes fast.
(Wie spät ist es? — Es ist 18:03h, aber meine Uhr geht 3 Minuten vor.)

Experiment – 33 TPs (22 NSs, 11 NNSs) –:

- 31 TPs (94%): It's 18:00h.
- 2 TPs (6%): It's 18:03h.

(16) Which day of the week is it? — It's wednesday, but my calendar is for the year 2002.

(Welcher Wochentag ist heute? — Es ist Mittwoch, aber mein Kalender ist von 2002.)

Experiment – 33 TPs (22 NSs, 11 NNSs) –:

- 14 TPs (42,4%): It's wednesday.
- 9 TPs (27,3%): It's friday.
- 3 TPs (9,1%): It's some other day of the week
- 7 TPs (21,2%): I don't know.

$$0[p \rightsquigarrow q][?q][p] \models \textit{presumably}(q)$$

$$0[p \rightsquigarrow q][?q][p] \Rightarrow_{se} q$$

$$0[?P(x)][P(a)] \models P(a)$$

$$0[?P(x)][P(a)] \Rightarrow_{se} \forall x [P(x) \leftrightarrow x = a]$$

$\text{repr-cg}(\sigma_s)$

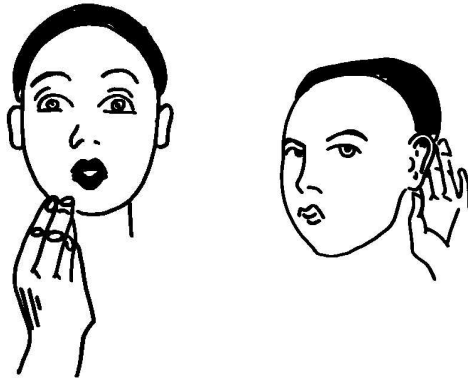
$\text{message}(\phi)$

$\text{utter}(A_1 \oplus \dots \oplus A_n, \sigma_s, \phi)$

$\text{adequate}_1(\phi, \sigma_s)$

$\text{adequate}_2(A_1 \oplus \dots \oplus A_n, \sigma_s)$

$\text{update}(\sigma_s, \phi, \sigma_s^{\text{new}})$



$\text{repr-cg}(\sigma_r)$

$\text{accommodate}(\sigma_r, \sigma'_r)$

$\text{reconstruct}(A_i \oplus \dots \oplus A_j, \sigma'_r, \phi')$

$\text{adequate}_1(\phi', \sigma'_r)$

$\text{adequate}_{2'}(A_i \oplus \dots \oplus A_j, \sigma'_r)$

$\text{update}(\sigma'_r, \phi', \sigma_r^{\text{new}})$

The speaker sends a message ϕ by uttering the sequence of words

$A_1 \oplus \dots \oplus A_N$.

The recipient recognizes $A_i \oplus \dots \oplus A_j$ and reconstructs the message ϕ' .

Avoiding semantic enrichment

$$0[p \rightsquigarrow q][?q][\textit{eigentlich}(p)] \models \textit{presumably}(q)$$

$$0[p \rightsquigarrow q][?q][\textit{eigentlich}(p)] \not\rightarrow_{se} q$$

(17) Will you come to the party? — *Eigentlich*, I have to finish my paper.

(18) Who came to the party? — John.

(19) Who came to the party? — Only John.

(20) Who came to the party? — At least John.

Outlook

Particles in Hintikka-style language games:

(21) I just took the money.

(Ich habe das Geld halt genommen.)

(22) Warum hast du das Geld genommen? – Habe ich halt.

Experiments:

(23) Wie spät ist es? – Es ist eigentlich 18:03h, aber meine Uhr geht 3 Minuten vor.

(What time is it? – *Eigentlich*, it is 18:03h, but my watch is 3 minutes fast.)