Signaling without Saying: The Semantics and Pragmatics of Dogwhistles

Linguistics Seminar

Prof. Elin McCready (Aoyama Gakuin University)  
Prof. Robert Henderson (University of Arizona)

Date: 26 April 2019 (Friday)  
Time: 10:30 a.m. - 12:00 p.m.  
Venue: Room 101, Leung Kau Kui Building, The Chinese University of Hong Kong

Abstract:
A dogwhistle is a piece of language that sends one message to an outgroup while at the same time sending a second (often taboo, controversial, or inflammatory) message to an ingroup. We propose an analysis of dogwhistles in the setting of social meaning games that treats them as signaling the persona of the speaker, and in some circumstances enabling an enrichment of the conventional meaning of the expression. We compare this account with views in terms of conventional implicature, invited inference and manner implicature.

Speakers:
Professor Henderson is an assistant professor of linguistics at the University of Arizona. His research is in formal semantics with a special focus on the indigenous languages of Mesoamerica (especially Mayan languages). Professor McCready is a professor of English Language and Literature at Aoyama Gakuin University, Japan. Both Professor McCready and Professor Henderson have published many articles in journals such as Natural Language and Linguistic Theory, Linguistic Inquiry, Language and Linguistics Compass, Semantics and Pragmatics, Journal Cognitive Science, Linguistics and Philosophy, Journal of Pragmatics, Journal of Semantics among many others.

ALL ARE WELCOME

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