

Analysis of Semantic Anomalous Utterances

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1. Introduction

Anomalous utterances are syntactically grammatical that contain meaningful constituents. However, they endure interpretation. For example, *The bottle is talking about Vienna. This anomalous sentence shows a form of a quantifier domain restriction that is made up of unique features different from other familiar types of domain restriction. In order to have an indirect insight into the semantic properties of anomalous utterances, it is crucial to understand the domain restriction. Knowing the indirect explanation about anomaly helps in avoiding unreliable truth-value judgments. For example:

[Bob owns a house with a large yard. In the yard there are six trees and six beautiful hand-carved Scandinavian planks, but nothing else—no bushes, brush, grass or anything of the sort: just dirt. Bob wants to build a fire to keep warm in the winter but is loathe to use those wooden planks. Consequently Bob uproots the six trees and uses them as firewood].

People would respond to this story, considering (a) as true and (b) as false.

(a) Bob uprooted everything in his yard and burned it.

(b) Bob burned everything in his yard.

(a) should entail (b), their logical form:

(a) $[\forall x: \text{InYard}(x, \text{Bob})][\text{Uproot}(\text{Bob}, x) \wedge \text{Burn}(\text{Bob}, x)]$

(b) $[\forall x: \text{InYard}(x, \text{Bob})][\text{Burn}(\text{Bob}, x)]$

There is an explanation of why the implication is blocked. In (a) the planks of wood is not seen as one of "everything", whereas in (b) they are. The domain of quantification in (a) is limited in excluding the planks. However, the domain broadens in (b).

(c) is one of the examples that have been studied by linguists and philosophers extensively.

(c) All the beer is in the fridge.

(c) does not indicate that a given fridge contains all the beer in the world. Some salient examples of the drink will be up for discussion. All the beer the speaker bought on a given day for example. The domain of quantification in (c) is highly sensitive to features of conversational context and how context interacts with language use. Whether (c) is usable to communicate depends essentially on whether it is used in a context.

The domain restriction in (a) shows two features that distinguish it from cases like (c). First, the domain of quantification shifts from (a) to (b), whereas the context does not have to change between their assessments. Evaluators of these sentences mark the truth-value attributions revealing a domain shift. Also, (a) differs from (c) in terms of its considerations of salience and relevance. The domain of quantification in (c) involves only the beer bought at the store on the day of the utterance, even if there is already some hidden beer in the basement. The former beer is more salient than the latter hidden because of its current conversation. If the other beer were salient and relevant to the on-going conversation, it would be part of the domain of quantification as well.

(d) ["You remember that beer that we bought at the store? Well, it turns out there was even more in the basement. And guess what: all the beer is in the fridge"].

The domain restriction in (a), however, does not respond to salience and relevance in the same way.

Another example, when a math teacher utters (1) to someone, it is unlikely that any domain restriction would be adjusted.

(1) Every number between 2 and 5 is prime.

The speaker is an expert who is unlikely to make this kind of mistake. However, in some cases, an utterance can be false while having a quantifier domain restriction. For example,

(2) Lucy runs into a room where Steve is standing, she grabs a small pile of books on the table, leaving only a pen on it, and runs out. Robin enters the room, sees only the pen on the table, and asks Steve what happened. Steve says "Lucy took everything on the table and ran with it".

In (2) Steve could say that despite of the fact that not everything was taken from the table, the pen was still there. Steve believes that Robin knows that the pen is not among the things talked about.

(3) Robin could arrive the room, look at his pen and say "I can't believe I left my precious pen on the table where Lucy could grab it. I see that Lucy took everything on the table, thank God she didn't grab my pen".

Though, it is not hard to understand what Robin means. He is contradicting himself. The fact that his utterance has reduced the pen related to the taking, and the falsity of his statement is felt. Therefore, the falsity of certain swap examples, even their obvious falsity in the face of mutually aware speakers, does not create a domain restriction. False cases may indirectly limit quantifier domains through normal modes of contextual quantifier domain restriction. However, in this case, the domain restriction will eventually be sensitive to considerations of salience and relevance.

Sometimes certain predicates are 'odd' or 'awkward' to use. This oddness in anomalous sentences does not indicate that they are false. However, it effects the domain restriction. Oddness can occur in three possible ways. First, Predicating something in a sentence is odd if people do not make these predications. Second, it is odd if it explains a highly wondrous situation. Third, predicating something in a sentence is odd if it is unclear or difficult to understand. Non-semantic conditions of the oddness, when they do not appeal to judgments of anomaly, are leaning to over-generate. When there are quantifier domain restrictions, it would be a mystery of why restrictions occurred. These two problems are somehow interrelated with the general strategy. Occasionally, speakers would like to communicate using things that are fantastical unusual, confusing or obviously false. A restriction that excluded this would lead to pointless limitations or abigger risk of misinterpretation.

When statements receive truth-valuelessness from some of their truth-valueless replacement examples, while anomalous utterances are truth-valueless, then the policy of the domains restriction preserves the truth-evaluability of many statements. This would lead to an increasing in a predictable dramatic power, with no obvious charges. For example:

(4) Everything has a moral if only you look for it.

What would the speaker be possibly talking about? Perhaps books, the lives of great men or incidental events. However, there are things the speaker is not speaking of, like bowling alleys. The things that have a moral are considered to be anomalous. If the examples are truth-valueless and would reduce a general interpretation of (4), then there is an explanation of why to restrict the domain of quantification in (4) over non-anomalous replacement examples. This allows (4) being a truth-evaluable and a true statement.

A highly debated claim:

(5) When an utterance shows the resistance to interpretation, it is not truth-valued.

(5) is to whether anomalous status prevents an utterance from stating a proposition in its context. (5) Affords an explanation of the special kind of domain restriction that an anomaly creates. Adopting (5) has three additional advantages. First, it gives an instinctive explanation of the occurrence of the domain restriction, which shows it to be a communicatively helpful linguistic mechanism. Second, the explanation confirms the fact about the domain restriction: it is a kind of a reply to a semantic feature that anomaly allows. Finally, it clarifies the features of the domain restriction that help us to differentiate between it and other types of quantifier domain restriction, such as the considerations of salience and relevance. No matter how salient a given object is, this will not change the fact that the relevant anomalous example fails to express a truth-evaluable proposition. A speaker who concentrates on an object, which figures as an anomalous replacement example of a following quantified statement, cannot be making an obvious mistake about what the facts are, such as the mathematician's utterance. There is no an absolute mistake about how the world is for the speaker to make. Thus, there is no immediate cause to reinterpret their statement.

Few theorists believe that the domain restriction in (6) is the result of added, unarticulated syntactic material.

(6) All the beer is in the fridge.

There is no principled way to pick out one of many extensionally equivalent expressions in order to limit the quantifier domain in a suitable way. One particular context "all the beer which we just bought" will do as well as "all the beer which we just bought today", and "all the beer which we carried in together". More to this problem of selecting one from several possible candidates, it is even hard to find one. Going back to this sentence: "Everything has a moral if only you look for it". It is limited to a highly diverse range of things. When one could find the right syntactic material to make the restriction, it would have to be incredibly long and absent to the speakers supposedly generating the relevant syntactic structure.

When asking if this phenomenon is semantic or pragmatic in nature. There are three facts that prove that it is a semantic treatment. First, the domain restriction is salience- unaffected and quite systematic. Second, the domain restriction is caused by the occurrence of a semantic feature, anomalous status, not of the context of use. It is quite easy to assume that a speaker shifts to the occurrence of a semantic feature are themselves semantic. All of these reasons are handling anomaly semantically. A third reason is considering the pragmatic phenomenon of domain restriction from salience or relevance as semantic in nature.

When is a quantified statement anomalous? The answer is in determining how to represent quantifier domain restriction in non-anomalous cases. Examples of quantified anomaly:

(7) * Some primes are red.

(8) * Every tomato is polarized.

From both a logical and a semantic perspective:

A standard rendition of the logical form of (8) might be as $[\forall x: \text{Tomato}(x)][\text{Polarized}(x)]$. It would be acceptable to predicate a variable with “Tomato” or “Polarized”. Thus, something must go wrong at the level of adding the quantifier. (7) Simply asserts a non-empty connection between two sets; set of numbers and the set of red things. However, the intersection of these sets is empty.

It looks like there is a ready explanation for why both (7) and (8) sentences are considered anomalous, they are similar examples of anomaly. There are many primes and many red things, but nothing non-anomalously talked of as both. Object *o*, either [*o* is prime] or [*o* is red] is anomalous. This is similar to (tomatoes) and (polarization). What reduces quantified anomalous problematic sentences seems to be non-intersective domains of significance. Then, a quantified sentence is anomalous if it has anomalous object substitution examples.

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