

Semantics I

Anna Szabolcsi

Fall 2009

MW 9:30 to 10:45

Preliminary list of topics

Block A: the first two weeks, 3 meetings

Compositionality and some of the research questions it raises

Block B: in this order, but possibly interleaved with topics from Block C

Operations in partially ordered sets (one week)

Generalized quantifiers (one week)

Free and bound variables, quantifiers (one week)

Building a grammar, models, assignments (one week)

Categorial grammar and type theory (one week)

Lambdas (one week)

Block C: in some order, possibly interleaved with topics from Block B

How to obtain reliable judgments in (syntax and) semantics? (one week)

Do *and/or* build *every/some* cross-linguistically? (one week)

Scope à la Montague and May (one week)

Different quantifiers, different scopes (one and a half weeks)

Bare plurals and kinds (one week)

Superlative determiners: *(the) most* (one week)

Texts and readings

Gamut: Logic, Language, Meaning, Vols. 1-2 (several chapters)

Szabolcsi: Quantification ms. as a background reading

Articles and excerpts, to be posted on Blackboard

Requirements

Timely completion of weekly written and reading assignments, typically due on Mondays.

Active participation in classroom discussion (I really mean it).

A squib, due at the end of classes. Group projects are more than welcome.

All members of the class are encouraged to email me or see me if they have a question or an idea. Extra group meetings can be arranged if several people are thinking about the same issues.