Workshop on approaches to coercion and polysemy

20-21 November 2017, University of Oslo, Oslo, Norway

Description
The phenomenon of coercion, where the interpretation of an expression seems to change depending on another expression that it stands in a predication or modification relationship with (e.g. ‘Fred began a book / began an essay / finished his drink / finished the kitchen / is a good boy / is a good pianist / froze the water / froze the bottle / has red hair / eats red meat / drinks coffee / drank two coffees’), is widespread and has often been remarked on within formal semantics, pragmatics and computational linguistics (Asher 2011, Egg 2003, Nunberg 1979, Piña go & Deo 2016, Pustejovsky 1995, Recanati 2004). However, it remains not well-understood, especially as regards the following questions:

- To what extent do these examples represent a unified phenomenon, and what constrains the availability of these kinds of enriched interpretations?
- What do these examples tell us about the nature of the lexicon, and the nature of predication?
  - To what extent do we need lexical meaning to be context-dependent?
  - To what extent do we need a more sophisticated compositional system than is commonly assumed in formal semantics?
- How can the coerced interpretation be implemented?

We wish to create a forum that will enable comparison of lexical, compositional and pragmatic approaches to these questions, and interaction between people coming from formal semantics, pragmatics and computational linguistics backgrounds. We are particularly interested in the interaction between coercion and the wider issue of polysemy, where a word may have more than one closely-related meaning.

Invited speakers
- Nicholas Asher (CNRS/IRIT)
- Robyn Carston (UCL)
- Robin Cooper (University of Gothenburg)

Guidelines for submission
We invite submissions for 30-minute talks plus 10 minutes for discussion. Abstracts are to be uploaded via EasyChair, at <https://easychair.org/conferences/?conf=copo2017>.

Abstracts must be anonymous, in PDF format, no more than two A4 pages long including any references, in a font size no less then 12pt, and with margins of no less than 1 inch / 2.5 cm.
Important dates

- Submission deadline: 8 August 2017
- Notification of acceptance: 4 October 2017
- Workshop dates: 20-21 November 2017