

Chang Liu

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Areas of Specialization	Philosophy of Language
Areas of Competence	Philosophy of Language, Philosophy of Mind, Ethics

ACADEMIC POSITIONS

Boya Postdoctoral Fellow	2020-present
Peking University, Department of Philosophy and Religious Studies	

EDUCATION

University of Western Ontario	London, ON, Canada
Ph.D., Philosophy	2015-2019
Title: Derogatory Words and Speech Acts: An Illocutionary Force Indicator Theory of Slurs	
Committee: Robert Stainton (Supervisor), Carolyn McLeod, David Bourget	
M.A., Philosophy	2014-2015
Title: Saving Descriptivism from Kripke	
Supervisor: Robert Stainton	
University of Massachusetts Amherst	Amherst, MA, USA
Visiting Student	2014
Supervisor: Louise Antony	

Sun Yat-sen University	Guangzhou, China
M.A., Philosophy	2012-2014
Title: Can Bennett's Compatibilism Save Non-Reductive Physicalism?	
Supervisor: Min Huang	
B.B.A., Electronic Commerce	2008-2012

PUBLICATIONS

Journal Articles

- Forthcoming. "The Derogatory Force and the Offensiveness of Slurs". *Organon F*.
- 2021. "Toward a Theory of Offense: Should You Feel Offended?" *Philosophy*.
- 2020. "Slurs as Illocutionary Force Indicators." *Philosophia*.
- 2020. "Slurs and Register: A Case Study in Meaning Pluralism". *Mind and Language*. 35(2), 156-182. Co-authored with Justina Diaz-Legaspe & Robert J. Stainton.
- 2019. "Slurs and the Type-Token Distinction of Their Derogatory Force". *Rivista Italiana di Filosofia del Linguaggio*. 13(2), 63-72.

Works in Progress

- "That's Not What I Meant: Toward an Ethics of Interpretation" (under review)
- "Saving Descriptivism from Kripke" (under review)
- "A Psycholinguistic Account of Politically Loaded Words" (in preparation)
- "Two Arguments against Hybrid Theories" (in preparation)

ACADEMIC PRESENTATIONS

- "That's Not What I Meant: Toward an Ethics of Interpretation"
The 7th International Conference on Philosophy of Language and Linguistics (PhiLang 2021), University of Lodz 2021 May 15
- "Toward an Ethics of Interpretation"
Philosophy Symposium, Peking University 2021 Apr 28
- "The Significance, the Questions, and the Three Varieties of Theories of Slurs"
5th Jingshi Analytic Philosophy Conference, Beijing Normal University 2019 Nov 30

“Slurs as Illocutionary Force Indicators”		
2019 APA Central Division Meeting, Denver, Colorado		2019 Feb 20
“Slurs and the Type-Token Distinction of Their Derogatory Force”		
24th World Congress of Philosophy, Beijing, China		2018 Aug 16
“Slurs as Illocutionary Force Indicators”		
Canadian Philosophical Association Annual Meeting, Université du Québec à Montréal		2018 June 4
“Slurs and the Type-Token Distinction of Their Derogatory Force”		
Syracuse University Philosophy Graduate Conference, Syracuse University		2018 Apr 13
“Slurs as Illocutionary Force Indicators”		
25th Annual Philosophy Graduate Student Conference, University of Waterloo		2018 Mar 9
“The Illocutionary Force Indicator Account of Slurs”		
PGSA Colloquium Series, University of Western Ontario		2018 Jan 23
“The Type-Token Distinction of the Derogatory Force of Slurs”		
11th Annual Western Michigan University Graduate Student Philosophy Conference		2017 Dec 8
“Hybrid Theories and Quantified Moral Statements”		
PGSA Colloquium Series, University of Western Ontario		2017 Nov 21
“A Speech Act Theory of Slurs”		
PGSA Colloquium Series, University of Western Ontario		2017 Jan 31
“Saving Descriptivism from Kripke”		
PGSA Colloquium Series, University of Western Ontario		2015 Aug 19

TEACHING EXPERIENCE

Peking University

02333390: Philosophy of Language	Guest Lecturer	Fall 2020
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University of Western Ontario

Phil 3410G: Philosophy of Mind	Guest Lecturer	Winter 2019
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Phil 2400F: Introduction to Philosophy of Mind	Co-Instructor	Fall 2018
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Phil 1020: Introduction to Philosophy	Teaching Assistant	Winter 2018 Fall 2017
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RESEARCH AND WORK EXPERIENCE

Assistant Editor at PhilPapers	Centre for Digital Philosophy	2014-2017
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SCHOLARSHIPS AND AWARDS

Graduate Research Scholarship		2019
Faculty of Arts and Humanities, University of Western Ontario		\$6,574
Dean's Entrance Scholarship		2014, 2015
Faculty of Arts and Humanities, University of Western Ontario		\$2,000, \$2,000
Chair's Entrance Scholarship		2014, 2015
Faculty of Arts and Humanities, University of Western Ontario		\$1,000, \$1,000
Best Paper Award		2013
Philosophy Summer School in China, Oxford University		£3,000
Awarded Scholarship to visit UMass Amherst		

CONFERENCE ORGANIZATION

Online Philosophy Workshops Series		
Peking University, Beijing, China		
Organizer		Since July, 2020
Annual Graduate Conference in Philosophy of Mind, Language, and Cognitive Science		
University of Western Ontario, London, ON, Canada		
Organization Committee		June 15-17, 2017
Philosophy Graduate Student Association Colloquium Series		
University of Western Ontario, London, ON, Canada		
Organization Committee		Jan-Apr, 2016

UNIVERSITY COMMITTEE AND SERVICE

Philosophy Graduate Student Association		
SOGS Councillor		2014-2015

PROFESSIONAL COMMITTEE AND SERVICE

Journal Referee

Disputatio Grazer Philosophische Studien Chinese Philosophical Review

PROFESSIONAL TEACHING TRAINING

Teaching Support Centre, University of Western Ontario

Western Certificate in University Teaching and Learning	Feb 2019
Teaching Mentor Program	Dec 2017
Teaching Assistant Training Program	Sept 2017

GRADUATE COURSEWORK

University of Western Ontario

Philosophy of Language Survey	Pro-Seminar
Kripke	Egalitarianism
Theories of Global Justice	Property & Political Philosophy
Toleration	Content and Consciousness
Consciousness	Mental Representation
John Locke's Theory of Ideas	Aristotle's De Anima

Sun Yat-sen University

Philosophy of Language	Epistemology
Metaphysics	Analytical Philosophy
Philosophy of Science	Philosophy of Psychology
Ancient Western Philosophy	Modern Western Philosophy
Basic Problems of Western Philosophy	History of Western Philosophy

PROFESSIONAL MEMBERSHIP

American Philosophical Association	Since 2017
Canadian Philosophical Association	2018-19
Minorities and Philosophy (MAP)	2018-19
Rotman Institute of Philosophy	2016-19

LANGUAGES

Chinese (native), English (fluent)

REFERENCES

Robert Stainton

Distinguished Professor
University of Western Ontario
rstainto@uwo.ca

Genoveva Martí

ICREA Research Professor
University of Barcelona
genoveva.marti@gmail.com

Christopher Viger

(teaching reference)
Associate Professor
University of Western Ontario
cviger@uwo.ca

DISSERTATION SUMMARY

SLURS AS ILLOCUTIONARY FORCE INDICATORS

Slurs are derogatory words. They express contempt and hatred toward marginalized groups. They are used to insult and derogate their victims and contribute to oppressive institutions. Moreover, slurs have many puzzling features for theories of slurs to explain, e.g., *derogatory force* (Why is “ch**k” a derogatory word?), *truth-conditional contribution* (Is “ch**k” co-referential with “Chinese?”), *appropriation* (How can a slur like “queer” cease to be derogatory?), etc. Many theories share the same picture that slurs *communicate* derogatory contents. However, none of them pay attention to the speech acts slurs are used to *do*.

In my dissertation, I argue that slurs are illocutionary force indicators (e.g., “I promise” is a force indicator for making a promise). The slur “ch**k” is derogatory because of its use to derogate the Chinese. Derogation is an illocutionary act (i.e., acts of doing something in saying something) to express negative evaluative attitudes. Moreover, a slur like “ch**k” has the same referent as its neutral counterpart, e.g., “Chinese.” This force indicator account does a great job of explaining the features of slurs. Take *non-derogatory use* for instance. Certain utterances of “ch**k” (e.g., by Chinese comedians or between Chinese friends) can be non-derogatory because they are misfired or infelicitous illocutionary acts (e.g., a non-Catholic’s saying “I hereby excommunicate you” is infelicitous).

To illustrate the advantage of my theory, my dissertation introduces other theories of slurs (e.g., prohibitionism, inferentialism, etc.) and how they fail because of their opposite positions. “Chang is a ch**k,” despite being derogatory, is true, according to my theory. By contrast, Mark Richard’s theory takes utterances of slurs to have no truth values. This position gives rise to problems for Richard. I argue that if “Chang is a ch**k” had no truth value, one could not lie with it. However, it is certainly possible to tell lies with slurs.

My dissertation defends the force indicator account from many objections. For instance, it might be argued that the so-called “derogation” is not a distinct class of illocutionary acts because it can happen in other illocutionary acts like promises (e.g., “I promise to bring you ch**ks”), assertions, commands, etc. I argue that multiple illocutionary acts, including derogation, can be performed within a single utterance, e.g., making an apology and an assertion with “I am sorry that the flight has been delayed.”

This dissertation contributes to the debate on slurs by offering a new perspective from speech act theory. Moreover, it provides support for the use theory of meaning with a case study of the meaning of slurs. It also enables a

framework for philosophy of race and gender to study the harm of slurs by analyzing how speech acts produce oppression.