

- WILLIAM STARR, *Expressing ‘May’ and ‘Must’*.
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Language is used to talk about the world and this makes it enticing to say that the meaning of symbol is the thing in the world it is about. Frege generalized the relation between a name and its referent to capture the meaning of symbols that don't seem to fit this model, e.g. *and*. **Dynamic semantics** [1] proposes an alternative to **referential semantics**: a symbol's meaning is the characteristic change its use brings about. This talk explores the relationship between these approaches by comparing an analysis of deontic *may* and *must* in modal logic to a new dynamic analysis inspired by my previous work on imperatives [3]. Reconstructing the classical concepts of truth and logical consequence in this setting will illustrate three previously unheralded resources of dynamic semantics: it allows (1) a definition of many evaluative concepts, truth among them, (2) logical consequence relations sensitive to various evaluative concepts and (3) connectives that combine sentences for which different evaluative concepts are appropriate (e.g. declaratives and imperatives). These resources allow for a better treatment of *may* and *must*: they can account for their **performative** and **free choice** behavior [2]. The dynamic approach can be aligned with the idea that language is about the world by loosening the relationship between meaning and reference, just as Frege hypothesized. But this time the loosening admits of a rigorous formal semantics.

[1] JEROEN GROENENDIJK AND MARTIN STOKHOF AND FRANK VELTMAN, SHALOM LAPPIN, *Coreference and Modality*, **The Handbook of Contemporary Semantic Theory**. Blackwell Publishers, Oxford, 1996, pp. 179–213.

[2] HANS KAMP, *Free Choice Permission*, *Proceedings of the Aristotelian Society*, vol. 74 (1973), pp. 57–74.

[3] WILLIAM STARR, *A Preference Semantics for Imperatives*, MS Cornell University, (2011). <http://williamstarr.net/research>