

## Optimality Theory and Natural Language Interpretation

Reinhard Blutner  
Humboldt University & ZAS, Berlin

Optimality Theory as developed by Prince, Smolensky and others has been fruitfully applied to phonology, morphology, and syntax. The attempt to apply the ideas developed in these fields to the semantics/pragmatics interface necessitates the conception of a *bidirectional* OT. The main reason for assuming the idea of bidirectionality (combining expressive and interpretive optimization) derives from a number of phenomena which, on the one hand, demand the treatment of preferred interpretations, and, on the other hand, suggest to take into account the existence of blocking effects. In this talk, some general motivation for the idea of bidirectionality is presented, the importance of this idea for the field of pragmatics (conversational implicature) is investigated, and some applications of bidirectional OT are outlined.