

Lecture 4

LCD 306: Semantics & Pragmatics

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Outline

1 Administrativa

- Miscellany
- Homework

2 Science

- Scientific Process and Thought
- Framework
- Homework

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Important Dates

- Recall that there will be **NO** class this coming Thursday
- We will meet again on Tuesday 17 February
- Exam two weeks from today! (24 Feb)

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Homework No. 2

Reading

- Howard Gregory (2000). *Semantics*.
- First two chapters
 - That are three main points of the first chapter?



Homework No. 2

Language

- Anything missing?
- Any disagreements?

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Semantics and Pragmatics

- What are the definitions of the following:
 - Linguistics
 - Semantics
- Semantics: Scientific study of meaning in language

Science

- After getting a working definitions of *meaning* and *language* we need to address *scientific*
- What do we mean by scientific study?
- In contrast to what?
- How do we investigate scientifically
- What framework are we using?

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Aquiring Knowledge

- Science is about understanding a phenomenon
- How we interpret *understanding*
- Epistemology
 - Rationalism
 - Idealism
 - Constructivism
 - Empiricism

Scientific Study

- How do we get at *understanding*?
- What are the goals of science?
 - Describe
 - Model
 - Explain

Scientific Method

- The process to get at understanding
- What really makes something *science*
 - Examine phenomena systematically
 - Formulate testable hypotheses and predictions (Hypothesize)
 - Formulate explanations (Theories) which are falsifiable
 - Seek out new data to test theory against (Replicate)
 - Revise if necessary

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Framework

- This is not a truly objective process
- Constrained by society and culture
 - Tacit assumptions
 - Limit acceptable areas of inquiry
 - Limit what is considered a “phenomenon”
 - Limit acceptable ways of investigating a problem
 - Limit what is considered an acceptable answer

Framework

- What framework are we using in the class?
 - Empirical approach
 - Quantitative (Experimental) Chomskian Linguistics

Experimental Chomskian Linguistics

- It is not a description of the phenomena with no attempt to explain/account for it.
 - “Butterfly collecting is not science”
- It is not modeling the phenomena without trying to understand/account for it.

Experimental Chomskian Linguistics

- Attempts to understand meaning in language
- How meaning is organized, represented, interpreted, and expressed in/by the mind.
- By positing falsifiable theories that have predictive power based off of the data available.
 - Experimentalist gather data by designing *experiments* (More on this later)

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Homework No. 2

Article

- Groups of 4
- Experimental Semantics or Pragmatics article
 - Exact variety of language
 - Research Question
 - Experimental Design