

Lecture 1

LCD 306: Semantics & Pragmatics

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Queens College
CUNY

Thursday 29 February 2015

Outline

1 Syllabus

2 Assessment Quiz

3 Meaning

Table of Contents

1 Syllabus

2 Assessment Quiz

3 Meaning

Syllabus

- Please review the syllabus at home
- We will only cover highlights in class today
- You are responsible for what is in the syllabus

Course Goals

- Semantics
- Pragmatics
- Experimental Design & Presentation

Course Materials

- Gregory, Howard (2000). *Semantics*. London: Routledge. [required]
- Stilwell Peccei, Jean (1999). *Pragmatics*. Milton Park, UK: Routledge. [required]
- other material posted online
- Freeware Programs: R, L^AT_EX

Course Assessment

- 3 Exams: 60%
- 2 Group Presentations: 30%
- 3 Assignment Packets: 10%

Language

- You are encouraged to use any variety of speech in class and on assignments and presentations
- Exams are restricted to:
 - French
 - Spanish
 - German
 - English
 - Arabic

Sketch of Class Policies

- Be on time
- Participate
- Exams: use homework and listen to music
- “Subway rules” for food in class and music during exams
- Be honest

Course Website

- cmadsen.common.gc.cuny.edu/teaching/lcd306
 - Syllabus
 - Lecture slides
 - Assignments

Accomodation

- Please see me about any accommodations needed
 - Larger fonts
 - sans serif fonts
 - colored paper
 - more time on exams
- No need to make an “official” request for services

Academic Integrity

- Acknowledge whose mind is responsible for what knowledge
- Only responsible for what you “know.” When in doubt, please come and talk to me.

Important Dates

No Lecture

- 12 Feb: No Class – Lincoln's Birthday
- 26 Feb: No Class – work from home
- 7 Apr: No Class – Spring Break
- 9 Apr: No Class – Spring Break

Important Dates

Exams

- 24 Feb: First Exam
- 31 Mar: Second Exam
- 12 May: Third Exam

Important Dates

Presentations

- 17 & 19 Mar: First Presentation
- 14 & 19 May: Second Presentation

Table of Contents

1 Syllabus

2 Assessment Quiz

3 Meaning

Assesment Quiz

- Not graded
- Something for me to assess where we are starting from
- Do your best, but don't belabor any one question. Just move on if you don't immediately know the answer

Quantitative Methods

- Experiment
- Dependent Variable
- Independent Variable
- Scientific Method
- Inferential Statistics
- Sample

Semantics

- Sense
- Reference
- Prototype
- Truth Conditions
- Entailment

Pragmatics

- Context
- Speech Act
- Politeness (mistakenly on the assessment quiz twice)
- Gricean Maxims
- Implicature
- Inference
- Conversation Structure

Topics to cover in class

- You are not expected to know much on the assessment quiz
- We will cover these topics during the course of the class

Table of Contents

1 Syllabus

2 Assessment Quiz

3 Meaning

Meaning

- When you hear an utterance what happens?
 - What information do you glean from it?
 - What in the utterance tells you what?
-
- I'm going to Nashville tonight to see my sister.

- I'm going to Nashville tonight to see my sister.

- The speaker has at least one sibling
- The speaker's sibling is female
- The speaker [in New York City] is flying
- There is a place called Nashville
- The speaker is close with the speaker's sister

Meaning

- When you hear an utterance what happens?
 - What information do you glean from it?
 - What in the utterance tells you what?
-
- I'm stoked for the new season on RuPaul's Drag Race to start.

Meaning

- I'm stoked for the new season on RuPaul's Drag Race to start.
- The speaker is from Southern California or a skater
- There is more than one season of RuPaul's Drag Race
- The speaker has likely watched the other seasons of RuPaul's Drag Race
- The speaker is a fan of RuPaul's Drag Race
- It is likely that RuPaul's Drag Race starts soon
- The [male] speaker is likely homosexual

Meaning

- When you hear an utterance what happens?
- What information do you glean from it?
- What in the utterance tells you what?

- Person A: Are you busy or are you ignoring me? If you are ignoring me you should say something.
- Person B: Don't make it weird.

Meaning

- Person A: Are you busy or are you ignoring me? If you are ignoring me you should say something.
- Person B: Don't make it weird.

- The speakers have some relationship with one another
- Person B hasn't responded to person A in a while
- There are some social conventions regarding *ignoring* and *replying* to someone

Meaning

- Meaning is embedded in the the words we use
- How we use them
- The “meaning” of a sentence is more than just the sum of its words

Meaning

- When we say something “means” something, what is “meant”?
- What does the word “mean” mean?

Meaning

- What does the word “dog” mean?

Assignment No. 1

- When a **noun** means something, what does it mean?
 - When a **verb** means something, what does it mean?
 - When a **adjective** means something, what does it mean?
-
- What does the word “dog” mean?
 - What does the word “run” mean?