

Joško Žanić

independent scholar, Croatia

Why Conceptual Semantics Is Preferable to the Truth-Conditional Approach in the Study of Meaning

Abstract

In this paper I argue that Conceptual Semantics, a framework in the study of meaning developed by Ray Jackendoff and Steven Pinker, is preferable to the dominant truth-conditional approach. The structure of the paper is as follows. In Section One, I present briefly the dominant approach. In Section Two I outline what I take to be the main challenge to it, namely radical contextualism. In Section Three, I present the conceptualist approach and show why I think it successfully avoids this challenge, while offering satisfying explanations. In the final Section, I attempt to show that Conceptual Semantics is also more naturalistic than Truth-Conditional Semantics, which I take to be a desirable goal.

Preferred month of presentation: any