

Introduction

Pragmatics: Investigating Meaning

Language's meaning-making potential distinguishes it from the range of human behavior, but this aspect of language is perhaps the most elusive

Meaning

What does "meaning" mean?

Semantics

Pragmatics



Dog: colematt/iStock/Thinkstock; Sidewalk: University of Waterloo; Guru: Klibbor/iStock/Getty Images

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Taking Context into Consideration

Semantics

Pragmatics

- context-free

- takes context into account



Cat: wenchiaawang/iStock/Thinkstock; Mat: University of Waterloo

Taking Context into Consideration

Talk show host

- aired Saturday after the game
- taped Friday



"How about them Leafs tonight?
I couldn't believe what they were
doing on the ice."

Hockey Player: University of Waterloo

Taking Context into Consideration

Semantics

- context-free
- deals with propositions
 - concerned with truth and falsity
- language in-vitro

Pragmatics

- takes context into account
- deals with utterances
 - concerned with appropriateness
- language-in-vivo



Cat: wenchiaawang/iStock/Thinkstock; Mat: University of Waterloo

Taking Context into Consideration

Context

Physical



Social/Cultural

#)*%, I loathe blue

Personal



Blue shirt: University of Waterloo; Cowboy hat, comb: wenchiauwang/iStock/Thinkstock; Football: Jupiterimages/liquidlibrary/Thinkstock

The Unit of Pragmatics?

~~The Unit~~ Perspective

For the utterance to be well-defined, a contexticentric perspective is required



Lexicology
(the Word)



Morphology
(the Morpheme)



Phonology
(the Phoneme)



Phonetics
(the Phone)



Syntax
(the Sentence)



Semantics
(the Proposition)

Icons: University of Waterloo