

Semantic Incommensurability and Scientific Realism

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Abstract

This paper reviews the situation with respect to the referential approach to the problem of semantic incommensurability. It argues that the thesis of semantic incommensurability does not pose a significant threat to scientific realism. However, there exists a "non-realist" defence of incommensurability, according to which the referential approach begs the question against advocates of the incommensurability thesis. This defence is criticized, and the basis for a realist response to incommensurability is presented.

Keywords: scientific realism, incommensurability, meta-incommensurability

Subjects: [General Issues: Realism/Anti-realism](#)

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