**Philosophy of Psychology in the frame of the Philosophy of Human and Social Sciences**

Research Master in Cognitive Science and Humanities: Language, Communication and Organization

Instructor: Jesús Ezquerro (jesus.ezquerro@ehu.es)

Number of credits: 4

2nd Semester. Mandatory

1. **Description, Motivations and aims**

The core problem of the Philosophy of Psychology in the frame of the Philosophy of Human and Social Sciences is the capacity of attributing attitudes (beliefs, desires, preferences, and so forth) to other people in order to explain and predict the behavior. This capacity is often known as “Folk Psychology”. Around this issue arises a great number of philosophical problems: ontological, semantical, epistemological and methodological. The above four issues are intimately related, sometimes in very complex ways. Furthermore, the respective positions concerning these relations have an important impact in the ways in which the research in the field has to be conducted. The aim of this course is to analyze these relations so that the students with little philosophical training can grasp the main lines that Human and Social Sciences have developed from the XIXth century to (specially) the current trends.

1. **Tentative course schedule**

**Session 1**

Introduction: What it is the subject of Social Sciences? How (if at all) are the social sciences distinct from the natural sciences?

**Session 2**

Summary of philosophical ideas about the social sciences. Two traditions methodological monism and methodological dualism. Historicism, Neokantism, Positivism, Phenomenology and Hermeneutics.

**Session 3**

The controversy about laws in social sciences: Are general laws possible in these fields? Aren’t?

**Session 4**

Explanation and prediction in social sciences. The covering law model of explanation. Probabilistic models. Teleological models. Functional models. The special case of self-confirmatory and self-refutatory predictions.

**Session 5**

Explaining human action. The nature of human action. The explanation – understanding controversy. Practical reasoning.

**Session 6**

Philosophy of Mind background: ontological dualism, behaviourism, Identity theories, functionalism, anomalous monism, eliminativist materialism.

**Session 7**

Recent developments in Psychology. The Cognitive paradigm and functional analysis. Cognition as computation. Connectionism and neural networks.

**Session 8**

Folk Psychology: the realism / antirealism controversy. The Intentional Stance. Syntactic and ontological eliminativisms.

**Session 9**

Mind reading. Introduction: innatism and modularity.

**Session 10**

The Theory – Theory / Simulation Theory controversy. Psychoneural evidences: autism and mirror neurons.

**Session 11**

The problem of Intentionality. Intrinsic *vs* Extrinsic Intentionality. Narrow and wide content. Theories of content: informational semantics, teleosemantics, functional role semantics, double aspect semantics.

**Session 12**

The “hard” problem: Consciousness. Introduction to the problems of consciousness: Subjectivity and Qualia. Cognitive theories of consciousness.

**Assignments, evaluation and grading**

Every student will be required to do 3 (short) presentations, and write a (short) report on each (about 5 pages long) and participation on discussions / classes.

**Recommended readings (subject to change)**

**Some general compilations:**

1. Haugeland, J. (ed.) *Mind Design II.Philosophy, Psychology, Artificial Intelligence*, Cambridge, MIT Press.
2. Lycan, W. (ed.) (1990) *Mind and Cognition. A Reader*, Cambridge, Blackwell.
3. Osherson, D. & H. Lasnik (eds.) (1990) *An Invitation to Cognitive Science*, 3 vols., Cambridge, MIT Press.
4. Rosenthal, D. (ed.) (1991) *The Nature of Mind*, Oxford, Oxford Univ. Press.

**Methodological Issues**

FODOR, J.A. (1974) “Special Sciences: or the disunity of Sciences as a Working Hypothesis”, *Synthese* 28:77-115 (also in J. Fodor, 1983: Representations)

Polkinghorne, D. (1983) *Methodology for the Human Sciences. Systems of Inquiry*, Albany: State of New York Press.

Martin, M. & McIntyre (1994) *Readings in the Philosophy of Social Science*, Cambridge: MIT Press

Von Wright, G. H. (1971) *Explanation and Understanding*, Ithaca, N. York

**Mental state attribution**

Churchland, P. (1981) “Eliminative Materialism and the Propositional Attitudes”, in [2].

Dennett, D. (1981) “True Believers: The Intentional Strategy and Why It Works”, in [1].

Fodor, J. (1978) “Propositional Attitudes”, in [4].

Davidson, D. (1980) *Essays on actions and events*, Oxford: Oxford University Press.

**Thought and computation**

Churchland, P. (1981) “Eliminative Materialism and the Propositional Attitudes”, in [2].

Dennett, D. (1981) “True Believers: The Intentional Strategy and Why It Works”, in [1].

Fodor, J. (1978) “Propositional Attitudes”, in [4].

Fodor, J. (1975) *The Language of Thought*, Bradford: MIT Press

**Functional properties and Physical properties**

Block, N. (1978) “Troubles with Functionalism”, in [4].

Kim, J. (1984) “Epiphenomenal and Supervenient Causation”, in [4].

Lycan, W. (1987) “The Continuity of Levels of Nature”, in [2].

**Classical – connectionist controversy**

Fodor, J. & Z. Pylyshyn (1988) “Connectionism and Cognitive Architecture: A Critical Analysis”, in [1].

Ramsey, W., S. Stich, & J. Garon (1990) “Connectionism, Eliminativism, and the Future of Folk Psychology”, in [1].

Rumelhart, D. (1989) “The Architecture of Mind: A Connectionist Approach”, in [1].

**Wide and narrow content**

Burge, T. (1979) “Individualism and the Mental”, in [4].

Stalnaker, R. (1989) “On What’s in the Head”, in [4].

Fodor, J. (1987) *Psychosemantics. The problem of meaning in the philosophy of mind*, Bradford: MIT Press.

**Consciousness and Qualia**

Nagel, T. (1974) “What Is It Like to Be a Bat?”, in [4].

Jackson, F. (1986) “What Mary Didn’t Know”, in [4].

Chalmers, D. (1996) *The Conscious Mind: In Search of a Fundamental Theory*. Oxford University Press.

Chalmers, D. (2010)*The Character of Consciousness*. Oxford University Press.

Dennett, D. (1992) *Consciousness Explained*, Back Bay Books