

What is semantics? associated with what the words conventionally mean concerned with linguistic meaning that is shared by all competent users of a language interested in the widely accepted objective/factual meaning of words rather than their subjective/personal meaning.

☐ Meaning (referential vs. associative)

☐ Referential meaning (denotation) refers to the basic components of meanings conveyed by the literal use of a word; i.e. the type of meaning described in dictionaries

☐ Associative/emotive meaning (connotation) refers to the different associations with the conceptual meaning

☐ E.g. needle = 'thin, sharp, steel instrument' is associated with 'pain', 'blood' or 'illness'

How can we analyze the meaning of different words? There are three types of semantic analysis:

☐ Semantic features

☐ Semantic roles

☐ Lexical relations

Semantic features

The basic elements involved in differentiating the meaning of each word in a language from every other word

☐ The meaning of a word is a collection of properties/features typically with two possible values (+ / -) (i.e. words are containers of meaning)

☐ Example of a feature analysis: boy is [ +animate, +human, -female, -adult]

☐ The approach of feature analysis does not work with all words in a language; there is more to the meaning of words than the basic types of features.

☐ Instead of thinking of words as containers of meaning, they may be viewed as fulfilling roles in events

Semantic/Thematic/Case roles

☐ Words are described according to the roles they fulfill within the situation described in a sentence.

A- Agent and Theme: The boy kicked the ball

verb: indicates action

Boy : The entity that performs the action = agent

Ball : The entity that is affected by the action = theme

The theme can also be an entity (The ball) that is simply being described (e.g. The ball was red)

B- Instrument and Experiencer

☐ If an agent uses another entity in order to perform an action - - - - instrument. The boy cut the rope with an old razor. He drew the picture with a crayon.

☐ An entity is the person who has a feeling, perception or state - - - - - experiencer. The boy feels sad.

☐ If we see, know or enjoy something, we're not really performing an action (hence we are not agents). We are in the role of experiencer.

C- Location, Source and Goal:

☐ Where an entity is (on the table, in the room) fills the role of location.

☐ Where the entity moves from is the source (from Chicago) .

☐ Where it moves to is the goal (to New York)

We drove from Chicago to New York.

Lexical relations

☐ Words have relationships with each other; the meaning of a word can be explained in terms of its relationship with other words.

☐ e.g. the meaning of 'big' can be described as the same as that of 'Large' or the opposite of 'small'.

☐ Analysis in terms of lexical relations includes:

- 1) Synonymy
- 4) Prototype
- 6) Polysemy
- 2) Antonymy
- 3) Hyponymy
- 5) Homophones and Homonyms
- 7) Metonymy

Synonymy

☐ Words that have the same meanings or that are closely related in meaning

☐ Examples of synonyms: answer/reply almost/nearly broad/wide buy/purchase freedom/ liberty car/automobile

☐ Synonyms can often, though not always, be substituted for each other in sentences (e.g. what was his answer/reply?)

☐ 'sameness' is not necessarily 'total sameness'; only one word would be appropriate in a sentence. (e.g. Sandy only had one correct answer (NOT reply) on the test. )

There are also regional differences in the use of synonyms: (e.g. American English: candy, chips, diaper, gasoline VS British English: sweet, crisps, nappy, petrol)

☐ Synonyms might differ in terms of formal versus informal uses. (e.g. My father purchased a large automobile VS My dad bought a big car)

Antonymy

☐ Words with opposite meanings

☐ Three main types:

- 1) Gradable antonyms: (opposites along a scale) > > Used in comparative forms (e.g., I am smaller than you) >> The negative of one

member does not necessarily imply the other. (e.g. "My car isn't old", doesn't necessarily mean that "My car is new". Non-gradable antonyms: (direct opposites/complementary pairs) > >Can't be used in comparative forms (e.g., \*He is more alive than you) >>The negative of one member of a non-gradable pair does imply the other member. (e.g. "My grandparents aren't alive =My grandparents are dead).

Reversives (one is the reverse action of the other) (e.g. enter/ exist, pack/unpack, lengthen/shorten, raise/lower, tie/untie, ascend/ descend) 2) 3) Hyponymy ☞ The meaning of one word is included in the meaning of the other. ☞ Examples are pairs like: horse / animal rose / flower carrot / vegetable ant / insect boil / cook stab / injure ☞ There is some type of hierarchical relationship( e.g. a rose is a type of flower) ☞ The words of a higher level are called superordinate terms (e.g. flower) whereas those of a lower level are called hyponyms(e.g. rose); if two or more words share one superordinate term, they are called co-hyponyms Prototypes ☞ Of co-hyponyms, the one which presents the best example/most characteristic instance of a superordinate term is called a prototype. ☞ Examples are pairs like: robin / bird shirt / clothing / chair / furniture Homophones and Homonyms ☞ Homonymy: A word with one form(written & spoken) has two or more unrelated meanings. ☞ Examples are like: Bank: 'financial institution' ; 'of a river'. Bat: 'flying creature' or 'used in sports' Race: 'contest of speed' or 'ethnic group' ☞ Homophones: words with different forms and pronunciation (e.g. two/ to / too; right /write) the same Polysemy ☞ A Word with the same form and two or more related meanings ☞ Examples are like bright: 'shining' ; 'intelligent' 'Foot'ofaperson,ofamountain,of abed. ☞ In dictionaries: polysemy (single entry) Homonymy (separate entries) ☞ Polysemy, homonymy and homophones are the basis of a lot of word play Polysemy & homonymy ☞ A word like "Date" can represent homonymy and polysemy: Homonyms: (two unrelated meanings/two entries) Date (= a thing we can eat) Date (= a point in time). Polysemy:( related meanings/ a single entry) day and month (= on a letter), an arranged meeting time (= an appointment) social meeting (= with someone you like) Metonymy ☞ A word used in place of another word with which it is closely connected in everyday experience, e.g. He drank the whole bottle (=the liquid Not the glass object). ☞ That close connection can be based on: 1.a container–contents relation (bottle/water, can/juice) 2.a whole–part relation (car/wheels, house/roof) 3.a representative–symbol relationship (king/crown, the President/the White House) ☞ Metonymy is used when talking about: 1.filling up the car, 2.answering the door, 3.boiling a kettle 4. giving someone a hand, 5. needing some wheels. Collocation ☞ Wordsthatfrequentlyoccurtogether(e.g. table/chair, butter/bread, salt/pepper, hammer/ nail.) ☞ In recent years, the study of which words occur together and their frequency of occurrence has received a lot of attention in corpus linguistics.