

**College of Education for Women / Tikrit University
English Department**

Lecturer: Dr. Israa Burhanuddin Abdurrahman

Semantics

- Semantics is the study of the meaning of words, phrases and sentences. Linguistic semantics deals with the conventional meaning conveyed by the use of words and sentences of a language.

Conceptual and Associative Meaning

- Conceptual Meaning covers these basic, essential components of meaning which are conveyed by the literal use of a word. e.g. needle : thin , sharp, steel, instrument.
- Associative Meaning is the idea, connection what that specific word brings to you. e.g needle : pain, doctor, illness,... etc.

Conceptual vs. Associative meaning

- **Conceptual meaning (denotation)**
 - literal meaning of a word
- **Associative meaning (connotation)**
 - associations attached to a word

snake

(denotative meaning)

"any of numerous scaly, legless, sometimes venomous reptiles; having a long, tapering, cylindrical body and found in most tropical and temperate regions."

(connotative meaning)

evil, danger

Semantic Features

- The hamburger ate the man.
- This sentence is syntactically correct: S => NP + VP (V + NP)
- But the meaning is not acceptable. The verb and the subject do not relate to each other.
- We identify the meaning by analyzing some features.

Semantic features : \pm

	table	horse	boy	man	girl	woman
animate	-	+	+	+	+	+
human						
female						
adult						

Linguistics for language teachers/ Dr. Jessie Grace U. Rubrico

Semantic Roles

- Mary wrote the letter with my pen.
- a- **Agent**: The entity that performs the action (Mary) .
- b- **Theme**: The entity that is involved in or affected by the action (the letter) .
- c- **Instrument**: The entity that is used by the agent to perform the action (my pen) .

d- **Experiences**: When a noun phrase (as the person) performs an action including a feeling, a perception do not actually perform the action, it happen by itself and you feel it.

e.g Mary saw a mosquito on the wall. saw => experiences

Mary cooked the meal last night. cooked => agent

e- **Location** : The direction or the place of an entity.

- e.g. Mary saw a mosquito on the wall. => on the wall

c- **Source** is where an entity moves from and Goal is where an entity moves to . e.g Sally borrowed some Money from Tom bought a birthday present and gave it to Sam.

Tom => source Sam => goal

Semantic Lexical relations

1- **Synonymy**: 2 or more forms with very closely related meanings. e.g broad – wide , hide – conceal

2- **Antonyms**: 2 forms of with opposite meaning .e.g quick – slow . big – small

- Gradable Antonyms: Antonyms that can be used in comparative constructions. e.g bigger than – smaller than the negative of one member of the pair does not necessarily imply the other e.g. That dog is not old. (It does not have to mean “ that dog is young“)
- Non – Gradable Antonyms (Complementary Pairs): Comparative constructions are not normally used, and the negative of one member does imply the other. e.g. deader / more dead => not possible e.g. that person is not dead : that person is alive.

3- **Hyponymy**: When the meaning of one form is included in the meaning of another, the relationship is described as hyponymy. e. g. rose – flower , carrot – vegetable rose is a hyponymy of flower - carrot is a hyponymy of vegetable.

- Animal (super ordinate) => horse / dog / bird
- Horse, dog, bird => co- hyponymys of animal

Homophones and Homonyms

- When two or more different written forms have the same pronunciation they are Homophones as meet/meat, e.g. write/right
 - We use the term homonymy when one form (written or spoken) has two or more unrelated meanings. e.g bank (bank – of a river) , (bank – financial institution)
- 4- **Polysemy**: When one form (written and spoken) has multiple meanings which are all related by extension. e. g . head => top of your body / top of a glass of beer / top of a company
- 5- **Metonymy**: Is a type of relation between words based simply on a close connection in everyday experience. e.g. bottle – coke (a container – contents relation) car – wheels (a whole – part relation) king – crown (a representative – symbol relation).
- 6- **Collocation**: The words that naturally go together. e. g. hammer – nail table – chair salt – pepper. They frequently occur together.