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.
• 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.

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**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.