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для студентов высших
учебных заведений**

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Первая часть хрестоматии знакомит с ключевыми проблемами исследования современного английского языка и их решениями, предлагаемыми в разных научных парадигмах. В книге представлены отрывки из наиболее значимых работ С. Ульмана, А. Круза, Д. Кристала, М. Бирвиша, Ю. Д. Апресяна и других лингвистов, внесших вклад в исследование семантики, фразеологии и лексикографии английского языка.

Предназначена для использования в курсе лексикологии английского языка, а также при подготовке курсовых и дипломных работ.

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Введение

Хрестоматия освещает ведущие понятия и раскрывает значимые проблемы в области исследования семантики, фразеологии, словообразования, этимологии и лексикографии английского языка. Книга дает возможность глубже понять лингвистические процессы, имеющие место в языке, способствует развитию способности критически анализировать научные проблемы и стимулирует студентов к проведению собственных лингвистических исследований.

Издание состоит из двух частей. Первая часть знакомит читателя с отрывками из наиболее значимых аутентичных работ по семантике, фразеологии и лексикографии, изданных в последние десятилетия. Среди авторов представлены ведущие отечественные и зарубежные лингвисты — С. Ульман, А. Круз, Д. Кристал, М. Бирвиш, Дж. Лич, М. Берри, Ю. Д. Апресян и др.

Во второй части вниманию студентов-лингвистов предлагаются отрывки из ставших классическими в области словообразования и этимологии работ У. Вайнрайха, Г. Марчанда, Д. Кастовского и других лингвистов.

Для более глубокого понимания текстов и отраженных в них лингвистических проблем вниманию читателей предлагается список вопросов, приведенный после каждого текста.

Материал хрестоматии может быть использован студентами-лингвистами при написании курсовых и дипломных работ, в которых исследуется лингвистическая проблематика, в первую очередь феномены в области семасиологии и теории словообразования.

**SEMASIOLOGY,
WORD-GROUPS, PHRASEOLOGY**

Laszlo Antal

QUESTIONS OF MEANING

Meaning and metalinguistics

7.1. In this chapter, we propose to discuss briefly a characteristic trend in modern linguistics. This new trend, metalinguistics, assigns a central role in human cognition to meaning, and draws from the difference of meanings observed in different languages far-reaching conclusions concerning the possibility of understanding between peoples. In the following, we shall first summarize the main tenets of metalinguistics, and we shall then make a few critical remarks on them. We shall also touch on a few questions regarding the relationships between meaning and translation.

7.2. Metalinguistics is an independent study which has as its task the examination of all interrelations and points of contact which have come into existence between the language and the culture of the people speaking the language. Metalinguistics thus claims to replace traditional semantics.

This branch of linguistic study arose in America and this can be explained by the fact that in America linguistics and ethnography are traditionally in close relationship.

Metalinguistics is a branch of linguistic science claiming for itself an independent field of research and possessing particular methodological processes which have been expounded in the works of Benjamin Whorf. The attention of scientific opinion, especially that of European linguists, was only drawn to him after the posthumous publication of a collection of his work.

Of these, the *Collected Papers on Metalinguistics and Language, Thought and Reality* are worth mentioning. Whorf states, among his generalizations, that the theory that all people possess in the cognitive process, a common logical system, which is independent of their native language, is an incorrect one. According to Whorf, language determines how the speaker perceives the outside world and how he judges it.

As linguistic patterns vary from one nation to another, the different nations, as a result of the individuality of their linguistic system, gain a different view of world. Hence, Whorf states that the linguistic system not only expresses our thoughts but also determines them.

Whorf reached this conclusion after a detailed analysis of a few Indian languages and cultures, especially the Hopi language, and compared his findings with the equivalent stages of development in Indo-European languages. The latter he terms Standard Average European, which he abbreviates to SAE.

It must be pointed out that Whorf's theory had certain antecedents in America as well as in Europe. In America, it was Sapir who expressed similar thoughts. We quote a paragraph in which the similarity of thought is at once apparent: "The understanding of a simple poem, for instance, involves not merely an understanding of the single words in their average significance, but a full comprehension of the whole life of the community as it is mirrored in the words or as it is suggested by their overtones... We see and hear and otherwise experience very largely as we do, because the language habits of our community predispose certain choices of interpretation." Of the European pioneers of metalinguistics, Humboldt, Cassirer and Weisgerber, must be mentioned as being in the forefront.

After these preliminaries, let us summarize the main thesis of Whorf.

One of the main theses of Whorf is referred to in literature as the principle of linguistic relativity. The individual, according to Whorf, can never freely comprehend surrounding reality. Even when he feels himself completely free, the linguistic system of his native language limits him to a certain mode of interpretation.

Therefore, we have to introduce the linguistic principle of relativity, which states that not all speakers in the world come to the same conclusion when observing the same outside reality. The users of different grammatical systems make different observations. They judge the similar actions of the outside world in a different way, and, therefore, a different representation of the surrounding reality is created within themselves.

Whorf, like Sapir, adds to this: "We cut and organize the spread and flow of events as we do, largely because, through our mother tongue, we are parties to an agreement to do so, not because nature itself is segmented in exactly that way for all to see."

In interpreting the principle of relativity, Hoiyer points out the differences observed in the concept of colours between the SAE languages

and the Navaho Indian language. The Navaho and the SAE languages divide the spectrum in an identical way apart from two differences. What we here in Europe see and call “black” is divided into two different conceptual units by the Navahos. But the section which we divide into “blue” and “green” is considered to be an indivisible conceptual unit by the Navahos.

Whorf proclaims the compulsory character of the linguistic system, by which he understands that the linguistic system which determines thinking is a phenomenon of background character, uncontrollable and beyond the consciousness of the speaker. Thinking always takes place along linguistic lines, not only by means of words but also in the form assumed by the linguistic components and the grammatical system, which sometimes assert themselves in quite an abstract fashion.

According to Whorf, the structure of a language is interlinked with the whole cultural pattern. In the course of history, language and culture have advanced together and have mutually influenced each other. But language is the factor which sets the limits to progress. The rigidity of linguistic forms can hinder the progress of culture — the spreading of new scientific results for instance.

7.3. We have tried to summarize in a nutshell the most important thesis of metalinguistics.

The most significant is undoubtedly the one which states that peoples of different languages do not comprehend the outside world in the same way and do not judge it in the same manner.

First of all, we have to examine whether this statement is correct. In our opinion, it is not. It is not correct, because *we become acquainted with the surrounding world not only through the medium of linguistic material but also direct*. It is true that the mother tongue suggests a certain mode of interpretation but this is constantly corrected and adjusted by direct experience. Or, to keep to our terminology, as all languages are systems “sui generis”, all languages divide and classify the outside world in a different way according to their own individual categories of meaning.

But the outside world, i. e. the world of denotata, can be approached not only through the categories of meaning but also direct. We not only acquire the knowledge that fire is hot through the words “warm”, “hot”, etc., in the mother tongue which accumulate the experience of many former generations, but also through the experience of burning our hand in childhood. Although the world of meanings is different and theoretically

incomparable and incommensurable from one nation to another, the denotata amongst which people live are, in fact, the same for all humanity or, at least, for a great number of people.

We must here touch upon a frequent misconception. Some authors consider — under the influence of metalinguistics — that the various languages determine the philosophical outlook (“Weltanschauung”) of people in different ways. It goes without saying that this view is totally incorrect. That the mother tongue does not determine the philosophical outlook is clearly proved by the fact that people speaking the same language can, and often do, hold different outlooks. Let us take only one of thousands of examples — the idealist, Hegel, and the materialist, Feuerbach, who both spoke the same language, German.

But let us return to the often cited example of the colour spectrum. We have to accept the fact that there are no such distinct meanings as “blue” and “green” in the Navaho language. But this does not mean that in the reality surrounding the Navahos there is no blue and green colour, or that from the standpoint of language green and blue could not be denotata. And, if, through the medium of their language, the Navahos cannot grasp the difference between green and blue, they can still see it with their eyes, that is, by their direct experience, just as we Europeans can divide into nuances that section of the spectrum which should be seen as uniformly black on the basis of the meanings of our respective languages. <...>

According to Whorf’s theory, language is the factor which limits the progress of culture. Again, we have to reject this assumption. We have referred to the relationship between language and culture in the first chapter. We have also mentioned that language does not belong to culture but is a means of social communication. As language is a means of social communication and not a part of culture, language and culture are two phenomena of a basically different character. Language, therefore, cannot be a part of culture, i. e. it cannot be regarded as one of its aspects, but only as its implement. Language is a more elemental phenomenon of human life than culture, in that language has to satisfy a more vital need.

7.4. Now, let us briefly examine the question of translation, since its manifold aspects have a bearing on the problems which have arisen in connection with metalinguistics.

With regard to translation, the opinion is constantly voiced that there can be no happy and absolutely adequate translation. What gives rise to

this conception? It is the otherwise obvious and undeniable fact that languages differ not only in their signs but also in their system of meanings. In this way — the argument continues — the meanings of two different languages, precisely because they are disparate and not coextensive, can never be exactly arranged to “cover each other”.

And, if we conceive of translation as a process in which one has to proceed “from meaning to meaning”, then we have every reason for thinking that the task is impossible. In practice, however, translation never proceeds from meaning to meaning. *Translation, as a process, is nothing more than an activity in which a denotatum indicated by the meaning of a certain language is rendered by the meanings of the language into which the translation is made.*

We have mentioned before the Hungarian expression “Csutortokot mondani”. This can be translated into English in two ways. If we want to remain at the meaning level we have to translate it as “To say a Thursday”. At the denotatum level, however, we have to translate it as “to be frustrated”, “fail”, “not to succeed”.

Just as, in the case of synonyms, we distinguished between “denotatum synonyms” and “meaning synonyms”, so, in the case of translation, we have to distinguish between “denotatum translation” and “meaning translation”. The “meaning translation” generally is an imperfect translation; if this is not so, it is a sheer coincidence. The “denotatum translation” is the correct translation.

The aim of all translation is to express in one’s own language a denotatum indicated in another language. Therefore, it is not true to say that, in the case of translation, we are directly interested in meanings. On this basis, we can state that translation, even a happy translation, is possible not merely in principle but also in practice. Although the meanings are not identical in different languages, the same denotata can be expressed via meanings of varying type, scope and nature.

Although, at the meaning level, there is an unbridgeable gap between the speakers of different languages, on the level of denotata, comprehension is not really limited.

Aids to the study of the text

1. What is the task of metalinguistics?
2. Name the American and the European pioneers of metalinguistics.

3. What is understood by the principle of linguistic relativity?
4. Why do we consider incorrect the statement that peoples of different languages do not comprehend the outside world in the same way?
5. Why do we describe as misconception the statement that various languages determine the philosophical outlook of people in different ways?
6. Can we grasp the difference between two denotata if at the meaning level there are no distinct meanings for them in our mother tongue?
7. How is translation understood by L. Antal?
8. How is translation understood by those who hold that there can be no happy and absolutely adequate translation?
9. What does the translation of the Hungarian phraseological unit prove?
10. Translate the English phraseological units *to go to the dogs*, *to have a finger in the pie* into Russian (a) at the meaning level and (b) at the denotatum level.

Margaret Berry

INTRODUCTION TO GENERAL LINGUISTICS

Lexis

Collocations

The patterns of lexis are called collocations. Collocations, like the structures of grammar, consist of ‘things’ occurring one after another in a sequence. For instance just as the structure exemplified by the clause *The waitress spilt the soup on the tablecloth* consists of things — the elements S, P, C, A — occurring one after another in a sequence, so too the collocation exemplified by the same utterance consists of things — the items *The, waitress, spilt, the, soup, on, the, tablecloth* — occurring one after another in a sequence. Similarly, just as the structure exemplified by the clause *I have read the first fifty pages of that book* consists of the elements S, P, C, occurring one after another in a sequence, so too the collocation exemplified by the same utterance consists of the items *I, have, read, the, first, fifty, pages, of, that, book*, occurring one after another in a sequence.

There are, however, important differences between the collocations of lexis and the structures of grammar. One difference between them lies in the part played by sequence in the formation of the patterns. Although, as has been shown, the ‘things’ which make up both kinds of pattern occur sequentially, the position of each ‘thing’ in the sequence is unimportant

for a lexical collocation, though important for a grammatical structure. The conversation

A. *Read the first fifty pages of that book.*

B. *I have.*

exemplifies different grammatical structures from those of the utterance *I have read the first fifty pages of that book*, but exemplifies exactly the same collocation. <...>

Another difference between the collocations of lexis and the structures of grammar lies in the generality of the things which make up the patterns. An element of structure is an abstraction (that is, a generalisation) from a large number of similar things. For instance the element subject is a generalisation from such items as *Theodore*, *Tiddles*, *They*, *Alexander* and *He* in the clauses.

Theodore seems fond of cats, Tiddles scratched Aunt Jemima. They like cream.

Alexander plays the flute.

He is musical.

These items share certain properties and therefore a general label can be applied to them all. An item of a collocation, on the other hand is a particular unique thing. For instance if, instead of considering *Theodore*, *Tiddles*, *They*, *Alexander* and *He* as items realising elements of structure, we consider them simply as items of collocations, we find that each is unique. Their shared properties are no longer relevant. It is the properties which make them unique which enable them to enter into collocations. Because each is unique, there is no way in which we can link them together and make a general statement about them. *Theodore is Theodore*, *Tiddles is Tiddles*, *They is They*, *Alexander is Alexander* and *He is He*. That is all we can say about them.

Just as the statements made about items of collocations are less general than the statements made about the elements of structures, so too the statements made about collocations themselves are less general than the statements made about structures. We can say of the five clauses cited in the previous paragraph that they are all alike in that they have the same structure, SPC. From a lexical point of view the five statements have nothing in common at all. If we add to these five utterances a sixth *The cat who likes music scratched Alexander*, we can say that,

lexically, each of the first five utterances has something in common with the sixth, in that each as a collocation which shares at least one item with the sixth. This kind of likeness between collocations is a much less general kind of likeness than the kind of likeness which exists between structures consisting of the same elements.

Because collocations and their items are less general than grammatical structures and their elements, they cannot be studied in quite the same way.

A greater amount of data is necessary to produce worthwhile results in a lexical study than in a study of grammatical structure. Because an element of structure is more general (can be realised by more items), than an individual item (which can be realised only by itself, though “realised” is perhaps the wrong term here), it can be found more frequently in a text. For instance, if a study were being made of the element predicator in a text, it would be a fair assumption that a predicator could be found in each of most of the clauses in the text. On the other hand, if a particular item, such as *spill*, were being studied, this item would certainly occur less frequently than the element predicator and might even occur only once or twice in the text. Thus in order to study a number of occurrences of the item comparable with the number of occurrences of the element, it would be necessary to study other texts in addition to the one text which would on its own yield worthwhile information about the element.

Because each element occurs more frequently than each item, a native speaker of a language has a greater experience, conscious or subconscious, of the relationships which exist between two items. For this reason a linguist studying grammatical structure can rely more on his own intuitions than can a linguist studying collocations resort more quickly to the use of statistical techniques in order to obtain more objective verification of their observations.

The relationships between the items of a collocation are, in fact, usually expressed in terms of statistical probability. The relationship between any two items is the probability (that is, the greatness of the likelihood) that one item will occur with the other. Some pairs of items have a strong probability of co-occurrence relationship, while other pairs have a weak probability of co-occurrence relationships. There is a greater likelihood, for instance, that *cat* will occur with *scratch* than that *cat* will occur with *music*, *cat* and *scratch* have a relatively strong

probability of cooccurrence relationship, while *cat* and *music* have a relatively weak probability of co-occurrence relationship.

The Strength of the Probability of Co-occurrence Relationship

The strength of the probability of co-occurrence relationship between a pair of items can be measured by comparing the number of times that the two items occur together, with the total number of times that each of the items occurs, *cat* and *scratch* will occur together quite a large number of times in proportion to the total number of times that *cat* occurs and in proportion to the total number of times that *scratch* occurs. *Cat* and *music* will occur together only a small number of times in proportion to the total number of times that each of the items occurs. *The* and *cat* might at first sight seem to have a strong probability of co-occurrence relationship, since they do often occur together. But when the number of times they occur together is compared with the total number of times that they occur they are found to have a relatively weak probability of co-occurrence relationship. The more times a particular item occurs, the less significant is its co-occurrence with any other particular item, unless it can be shown to co-occur with that item a very high proportion of the total number of times on which it occurs.

Some pairs of items have such a weak probability of co-occurrence relationship that it is unprofitable to pursue the relationship between them. They can be considered irrelevant to each other from a lexical point of view.

Another problem which arises from the lack of generality of collocations and their items is the question of knowing where to begin. Elements of structure can be compared with each other on the basis of shared or not shared properties and focal points of interest arise from the comparison. For instance, if one is considering the structure of the nominal group, the obvious focal point of interest is the headword. Modifiers and qualifiers can be considered in relation to the headword. On the other hand, if one is considering a collocation, there is no natural focal point, no natural headword. There is no reason why any one of the items of the collocation *The waitress spilt the soup on the tablecloth* should be regarded as a headword any more than any of the others. The items are unique and cannot be compared.

This problem is usually solved by the artificial creation of a headword. An item is selected on which interest is to be focused. This item

temporarily becomes the headword and the other items in the collocation are considered in relation to the selected item. The grounds in which the selection is made are usually not lexical grounds at all. One might, for instance, have a grammatical reason for the selection; one might be interested in the items which realize the element headword of nominal groups which act as the subjects of clauses. In this case one would choose *waitress* as the “headword” of the above collocation. Alternatively one might have a contextual reason; one might be interested in items which realise food concepts. In this case one would choose *soup*. These artificial headwords are called nodes. The items which occur with a node in a collocation are called the collocates of the node. If *waitress* was chosen as the node of the above collocation, *soup* would be one of its collocates. If *soup* were chosen as the node, *waitress* would be one of its collocates. (In an ideal lexical study every item in turn would be treated as the node for all the vast number of items which occur in a worthwhile amount of data to be treated in this way. The assistance of a computer is essential. Often one has to make do with a less than ideal lexical study).

The strength of the probability of co-occurrence relationship between two items varies according to which of the items is being treated as the node and which the collocate. *Cat* occurs with *the* more times in proportion to the total number of occurrences of *cat* than *the* occurs with *cat* in proportion to the total number of occurrences of *the*. If *cat* is the node, the relationship is stronger than if *the* is the node.

A collocation, then, can be said to consist of a node and its collocates. It is important however to recognize that ‘consists of’ has a different implication here from the implication it has in the statement, that the structure of a nominal group consists of the elements modifier, headword and qualifier. This latter statement represents a truth about the English language. The statement that a collocation consists of a node and its collocates simply refers to a convenient way in which a linguist organises his data. <...>

Context

Contextual Meaning and Formal Meaning

Systemic linguistics distinguishes between two different kinds of meaning: contextual meaning and formal meaning. It is contextual

meaning that we are primarily concerned with in this chapter, but it will perhaps be helpful if a certain amount of space is devoted also to formal meaning.

Contextual Meaning

Contextual meaning is what most people mean by the term meaning when they use it in everyday conversation. Contextual meaning is the relationship between a formal item or pattern and an element of situation; that is, between a formal item or pattern and something which is outside the language itself, something which belongs to the world around.

For instance, the English lexical item *man* has contextual meaning. Users of English regularly associate the item *man* with objects looking like this X which occur in the world around. The relationship between the item *man* and the objects XXX is the regular association made between them by users of English. The contextual meaning of the item *man* is the relationship of regular association which it has with the objects XXX. The same relationship of regular association applies between the item *leap* and certain actions which occur in the world. The same relationship applies between the item *clever* and certain qualities which are perceivable in the world. In each case there is a relationship of regular association between a linguistic item and something which is extra-linguistic, something which is part of the situation of language rather than part of the language itself.

The statement, that contextual meaning is what most people mean by the term meaning in everyday conversation should perhaps be qualified. The term contextual meaning really has a wider meaning than that which most people give to the term meaning. <...>

Situation can be subdivided into thesis, immediate situation and wider situation. What most people think of as meaning is the relationship between a formal item and an element of thesis. However there can also be a relationship of regular association between a formal item and an element of immediate situation, or a relationship of regular association between a formal item and an element of wider situation. Both these kinds of relationship of regular association between a formal item and an element of wider situation. Both these kinds of relationship are included in contextual meaning as well as the relationship between a formal item and an element of thesis.

The relationships discussed above between *man* and certain objects, between *leap* and certain actions, between *clever* and certain qualities, are all examples of relationships between formal items and elements of thesis.

Examples of the second kind of contextual relationship, that between a formal item and an element of immediate situation provided by the items *grub* (= food) and *luncheon*. When the item *grub* is used, there are usually present in the immediate situation such elements as informality, familiarity between speaker and hearer, social equality between speaker and hearer. The item *grub* is regularly associated with informality, familiarity, social equality. It has a relationship of regular association with these elements of immediate situation. When the item *luncheon* (as opposed to *lunch*) is used, there are usually present in the immediate situation such elements as formality, ceremony, special occasion. The item *luncheon* is regularly associated with formality, ceremony, special occasion. It has a relationship of regular association with these elements of immediate situation.

Examples of the third kind of contextual relationship, that between a formal item and an element of wider situation, are provided by the items with *it*, *trendy*, *switched on* (all with the sense of “up-to-date”); *afters*, *pudding*, *sweet*, *dessert* (all referring to the course which follows the main course of a meal); *mommie* (= scarecrow), *suave* (= smooth). When the items with *it*, *trendy*, *switched on*, are used, the wider situation of the user usually includes either the element of belonging to a particular generation or the element of having spent quite a lot of time with members of that generation. Each of the items *afters*, *pudding*, *sweet*, *dessert*, is associated with a particular kind of social or educational background on the part of its users. When the items *mommie* or *suave* are used, the wider situation of the user usually includes the element of having spent a good deal of time in Devonshire or the element of being related to someone who has spent a good deal of time in Devonshire. All these items have relationships of regular association with elements of the wider situation of their users. Each of these three kinds of relationship between an item and situation enables the item, when it is used to provide a certain kind of information. <...>

Formal Meaning

Contextual meaning, then, is the relationship between a linguistic item, pattern or term from a system and an element of situation. It is a relationship between things at different points on the scale of realisation.

Formal meaning, on the other hand, is the relationship between a linguistic item, pattern or term from a system and other linguistic items, patterns or terms from systems belonging to the same level of language. Formal meaning is a relationship between things at the same point on the scale of realisation.

Formal meaning of a lexical item is its potentiality for collocating with other lexical items and its potentiality for contrasting with other lexical items.

The formal meaning of the lexical item *cat*, for instance, is its ability to collocate with *mew*, *purr*, *lap*, *milk*, *fur*, *tail*, etc. and its ability to contrast with *dog*, *mouse*, *kitten*, etc. A complete statement of the formal meaning of the lexical item would involve a comprehensive list of all the other lexical items with which it could collocate and a comprehensive list of all the other lexical items with which it could contrast. A complete statement would also involve an assessment of the likelihood of the item collocating with or contrasting with each of the items on the lists.

The formal meaning of a grammatical item or pattern is its potentiality for collocating with other grammatical items and patterns, its potentiality for contrasting with other grammatical items and patterns, and its potentiality for being substituted for other grammatical items and patterns.

The formal meaning of the grammatical item *drank*, for instance, includes its ability to occur with *he*, *she*, *John*, *Mary*, *the horse*, etc. preceding it and its ability to occur with *water*, *beer*, *a pint*, etc. following it (but not with *water*, *beer*, *an pint*, etc. preceding it and not with *he*, *she*, *John*, *Mary*, *the horse*, etc. following it). The formal meaning also includes the item's ability to contrast with *drink* and *drunk*. The formal meaning also includes the fact that *drank* is grammatically substitutable for *ate*, *sewed*, *chose*, *broke*, etc. (but not for *John*, *horse*, *beer*, etc., or for *happy*, *beautiful*, *nasty*, etc. or even for *was*, *became*, *seemed*, etc.).

It should not be forgotten of course that in grammar we are concerned with formal items as members of classes, not as individual items. <...>

The term *formal meaning* often worries people who meet it for the first time, since the use of the term *meaning* here is so far removed from the usual use of the term. The term *contextual meaning* presents much less difficulty, since although this use of the term *meaning* extends the everyday sense of the term it does not radically change it.

It would perhaps be helpful to think of formal meaning as “the means of meaning” rather than actually as “meaning”. Contextual meaning

could then be regarded as “meaning proper”. It is through its formal meaning that language is able to have contextual meaning. It is because of its formal contrasts and patterns that language is able to have regular associations with elements of situation. Before an item can become regularly associated with an element of situation it must be identifiable as a distinct item. An item takes its identity from the patterns in which it occurs and the contrasts into which it enters. Language itself is structured and it is therefore able to express in an ordered way generalisations about situation. <...>

Aids to the study of the text

1. What are collocations?
2. What are the relationships between the items of a collocation?
3. What is the general way to measure the strength of the probability of co-occurrence relationship?
4. How is it possible to define a headword in a collocation?
5. What is meant by the term “nodes”?
6. What is the difference between contextual meaning and formal meaning?
7. What are the kinds of contextual relationships?

Manfried Bierwisch

SEMANTICS

The Analysis of Word Meanings

<...> All approaches to the semantic analysis of natural languages are based on the insight that the meanings of lexical items are not unanalysable or undefinable wholes. This insight has been made explicit in essentially two ways. The first is based on meaning postulates, the other on semantic components into which the lexical meanings are analysed. Meaning postulates, or semantic rules, <...> might be illustrated by the following examples:

- (1) (a) boy — MALE;
(b) girl — FEMALE.

A rule like (1a) says that *boy* implies *male* or, what amounts to the same, that sentences like *A boy is male* or *If x is a boy, then x is male* are

analytic. Meaning postulates might also involve logical constants like “and”, “or”, “not”, etc.:

- (2) (a) man — MALE and ADULT;
(b) woman — FEMALE and ADULT;
(c) boy or girl — NOT ADULT;
(d) female — NOT MALE;
(e) man or woman or boy or girl — HUMAN.

The meaning of a lexical element is therefore specified, roughly speaking, by the set of all the meaning postulates in which it occurs. More precisely: the meaning of a lexical element of L is defined implicitly by the set of all meaning postulates associated with L. <...> The second approach is that of componential analysis, which underlies the linguistic theories developed by Katz and Fodor, Weinreich, Bierwisch and others. It defines the meaning of a lexical element explicitly in terms of semantic components. These components are not parts of the vocabulary of the language itself, but rather theoretical elements, postulated in order to describe the semantic relations between the lexical elements of a given language. These components are connected again by logical constants. Thus we get the following oversimplified example:

- (3) (a) boy: ANIMATE and HUMAN and MALE and not ADULT;
(b) girl: ANIMATE and HUMAN and FEMALE and not ADULT;
(c) man: ANIMATE and HUMAN and MALE and ADULT;
(d) woman: ANIMATE and HUMAN and FEMALE and ADULT.

A system of such explicitly defined lexical elements might be supplemented by a set of implicational rules of the following type:

- (4) (a) HUMAN — ANIMATE;
(b) MALE — not FEMALE;
(c) FEMALE — not MALE;
(d) MALE — ANIMATE;
(e) FEMALE — ANIMATE.

These implicational rules automatically complete a redundancy-free entry like (5a) to its fully specified form (5b):

- (5) (a) boy: HUMAN and MALE and not ADULT;
(b) boy: ANIMATE and HUMAN and MALE and not FEMALE and not ADULT.

Rules of this type not only simplify the necessary dictionary specifications; they also express relevant generalizations about the semantic structure of the vocabulary described.

There is obviously a close connection between the two types of analysis just illustrated. In fact, as far as only systems of a particular kind are considered, a componential analysis of the type illustrated by (3) and (4) can be directly converted into a system of meaning postulates, and vice versa. Notice, however, that the status of elements like MALE in (1) and (2) is quite different from that of MALE in (3) and (4): while MALE, ADULT, HUMAN belong to the language described, this is not the case with respect to the components MALE, ADULT, ANIMATE, etc. The relationship between implicit and explicit definition in more complicated cases has not been systematically investigated so far. For the present exposition I will assume, quite gratuitously, that both explications are at least formally equivalent, in the sense that for each set of meaning postulates there is a componential analysis of the vocabulary involved defining the same semantic relations, and vice versa. <...>

The Dictionary as a System of Concepts

In terms of componential analysis, the meaning of a word is a complex of semantic components (or features or markers) connected by logical constants. This assumption immediately allows us to define certain semantic properties and relations of lexical entries. Thus a word is semantically ambiguous if it has more than one complex of semantic features assigned to it. Two entries E and E are synonymous, if their meanings consist of the same components connected by the same logical constants. E is a hyponym of E (i. e. E is included in E) if the meaning of E contains the components occurring in the meaning of E, but not vice versa. The *woman* might be a hyponym of *adult*, since the former but not the latter contains e. g. the component FEMALE. E and E are antonyms, if their meanings are identical except that the meaning of E has a component C where that of E had C, and C and C belong to a particular subset of mutually exclusive components.

Sets of lexical entries whose meanings have certain features in common form a semantic field. A famous example is that of kinship terms, whose elements share the feature configuration ANIMATE and HUMAN and RELATIVE. The verbs of motion are another example.

There are also subfields, e. g. that of male relatives including *father*, *brother*, *son*, *uncle*, etc., or that of lineal v. collateral kinship. On the other hand there are more inclusive fields, e. g. that of social roles, which includes, besides a subject of the kinship terms, elements like *friend*, *colleague*, *teacher*, etc. It follows therefore that semantic fields are relative, and not absolute. The notion of semantic fields was introduced by Trier in order to account for the observation that the meaning of lexical elements is specified only by their relatedness to and their difference from other relevant elements.

Besides having components in common, the elements of the vocabulary are connected to each other by other relations. One of these is the pertinence relation of which a particular instance is the relation between part and whole. The words *arm*, *hand*, *finger*, for example, denote parts of the human body, so that their meaning must contain a component that relates them appropriately to all entries whose meaning contains the feature HUMAN. Another instance of the pertinence relation is class membership. Thus an entry like *member* must be connected by a certain feature to words like *set*, *class*, *club*, *party*, in short to all entries shown by appropriate features to represent different types of sets or groups.

A different type of relation among the elements of the vocabulary is established by restrictions on their combinability. Thus verbs like *talk*, *think*, *dream* only allow subjects with the feature HUMAN; *drink* requires an object with the feature LIQUID; the adjective *blond* requires a subject specified by such appropriate features as human hair. Restrictions of this kind are called selection restrictions, as they indicate which lexical elements may be selected in order to form a semantically well-formed combination of two or more syntactically combined lexical elements. They specify, so to speak, possible semantic affinities among lexical entries. How these conditions are to be represented will be indicated briefly below.

In general, one might define a complex of semantic components connected by logical constants as a concept. The dictionary of a language is then a system of concepts in which phonological form and certain syntactic and morphological characteristics are assigned to each concept. This system of concepts is structured by several types of relations. It is supplemented, furthermore, by redundancy of implicational rules of the kind illustrated under (4), representing general properties of the whole system of concepts. This last assumption accounts for the fact

that it is much easier to come to understand a new concept in a system whose general structure has already been acquired than an isolated element of a completely unknown system. At least a relevant part of these general rules is not bound to particular languages, but represents presumably universal structures of natural languages. They are not learned, but are rather apart of the human ability to acquire an arbitrary natural language. <...>

Aids to the study of the text

1. Why is it possible to say that the meanings of lexical items are not unanalysable or undefinable wholes?
2. What are the approaches to the semantic analysis of natural languages?
3. What is word meaning in terms of componential analysis?
4. What are semantic properties and relations by which the elements of the vocabulary are connected to each other?
5. What is the dictionary of a language from the conceptual point of view?

Herbert H. Clark

WORD ASSOCIATIONS AND LINGUISTIC THEORY

<...> The free-association game has been played for centuries. It requires only a stimulus, a referee, and a player who is willing to follow the simple rule, "Say the first thing that comes to mind when the stimulus is presented to you." <...> Word associations have characteristically different effects depending on the rules the player has followed. When the player is allowed to take his time, he generally reacts with rich images, memories, or exotic verbal associations, and these give way to idiosyncratic, often personally revealing, one-word responses. But when he is urged to respond quickly, his associations become more superficial, less idiosyncratic, and more closely related in an obvious way to the stimulus; these responses are much more predictable in that they are the ones almost everyone else gives to the stimulus. But if he has to respond even more quickly, the player will ignore even the meaning of the stimulus and produce clang responses words that sound like or rhyme with the

stimulus. Of these three categories, it is the second that is most dependent on linguistic competence. But there are important differences even among these fast, meaningful responses. The common associations — i. e., the responses other people are most likely to give — are produced more quickly than the uncommon ones. This suggests that we can attach greater importance to the fastest, most frequent associations, for hypothetically they are the product of the basic association mechanisms.

Even the most preliminary analysis of the word-association game reveals its kinship with language comprehension and production. The game has three identifiable stages: (1) the player must understand the stimulus; (2) he must operate on the meaning of the stimulus; and (3) he must produce a response. It is the unique second stage that clearly sets this game apart from normal language mechanisms. It contains an associating mechanism, which, through its associating rules, fixes the response and the third stage. <...>

I will now consider various important associating rules. In keeping with traditional studies of word associations, I will treat paradigmatic and syntagmatic responses separately. Paradigmatic responses are those that fall in the same syntactic category as the stimulus; syntagmatic responses are those that fall into other categories. For example, a paradigmatic response to the noun *tree* might be the noun *flower*, a syntagmatic response to the same word might be the adjective *green*. For adults, paradigmatic responses are far more prevalent than syntagmatic ones, so they will be discussed first.

The Paradigmatic Rules

The minimal-contrast rule. If a stimulus has a common opposite (an antonym), it will always elicit that opposite more often than anything else. These responses are the most frequent found anywhere in word associations. <...>

The most compelling evidence for this rule comes from the so-called popular adjectives (*long v. short*, *good v. bad*, etc.). Deese found that the most frequent association to each of 80 such adjectives was its antonym. At the first stage, the feature list for *long*, for example, would end with [+polar]. The second-stage associating rule would change [+polar] to [-polar], and the third stage result would be *short*. Nouns, too, often show alterations of only one feature. Among animate nouns, the sign of the feature [±male] is reversed, giving *male* — *female*, *man* — *woman*, *boy* —

girl, he — she, him — her, aunt — uncle, etc. (and vice versa) as most frequent responses. Antonymous prepositions, e. g. *up — down, above — below*, and *to — from*, strongly elicit each other with a change of feature [$\pm$ polar] and so do verb “converses”, e. g. *give — take, sell — buy, go — come*, and so on. Other frequent single-feature contrasts include [$\pm$ polar] in verbs (*is — are, was — were, has — have*, etc.), [$\pm$ past] among strong verbs (*is — was, are — were, has — had, take — took*, etc.). [$\pm$ nominative] among pronouns (*he — him, she — her, they — them*, etc.), and [$\pm$ proximal] among the deictic words (*here — there, this — that, now — then*, etc.). Obviously, the minimal-contrast rule accounts for a large number of the commonest responses in word associations. <...>

The marking rule. This rule, a particularization of the minimal-contrast rule, was suggested by some remarks of Greenberg. He pointed out that there was a greater tendency to change a feature from, rather than to, its marked value in word association data. <...> Consider the feature [$\pm$ plural] for nouns. A plus signals the addition of the morpheme *pl*, usually *-z*; a minus signals the morpheme *sg*, usually zero. <...>

[$\pm$ plural] is therefore the marked value, and [$\pm$ plural] the unmarked. In word-association data, then, it should be commoner to find, say, *dogs — dog*, than *dog — dogs*, and it is. Comparative adjectives also elicit their positive forms (*better — good*) more often than the reverse (*good — better*), and past participle verbs their infinitive forms (*brought — bring*) more often than reverse (*bring — brought*). Marshall extended this rule to unmarked and marked adjectives (e. g. *long* and *short*, respectively). An examination of 16 pairs of adjective stimuli that have only the antonym generally supports this extension, with 14 of the 16 pairs consistent with the rule. Also, if we take the accusative case to be unmarked with respect to the nominative case, the rule holds, with the stimulus response pairs *I — me, he — him, she — her, they — them*, etc., occurring more often than the reverse pairs. Again, if the suffix *-less* is marked with respect to *-ful*, the rule holds once more, as in pairs like *careless — careful, thoughtless — thoughtful*, and *useless — useful*. And there are other cases which confirm this.

On the other hand, *man* is generally considered to be unmarked with regard to *woman*, and *he* with regard to *she*, *him* with regard to *her*, and so on. Yet *man* elicits *woman* more consistently than *woman* does *man*, the same is true for *he* and *she*, *her* and *him*, and certain others. To save the marking rule, *man* would have to be shown to be marked, and

woman unmarked. This, however, would go against the very foundations of marking found in Greenberg and elsewhere. The marking rule therefore cannot be retained as a general rule.

Some results which seem to agree with marking hypotheses can furthermore be explained in an alternative way by considering the surface ambiguity of the stimuli. The unmarked adjective *deep*, for example, could be assigned either of two senses at stage one: (1) in depth as in *three feet deep*, or (2) opposite to *shallow* as in *The river is deep*. But *shallow* has only one sense, opposite to *deep*. If the minimal-contrast rule is invoked at stage two, *deep* will at times produce words like *high*, *far*, etc., from sense (1) and at other times *shallow* from sense (2); *shallow* on the other hand, will always produce *deep*. The consequence is that *shallow* should elicit *deep* more than the reverse, which agrees with the data. Thus the minimal-contrast rule, taking together with the surface ambiguity of unmarked adjectives, might account quite simply for the asymmetry in associations between unmarked and marked words.

The feature deletion and addition rules. There also appear to be rules that either delete features from, or add features to the end of the feature list. As Marshall points out, the deletion rule should have a precedence over the addition rule, since there are many possible features that might be added, but those to be deleted are exactly specified. Deletion of features generally produces superordinates, like *fruit* from *apple*, while addition of features produces subordinates, like *apple* from *fruit*. Both superordinates and subordinates occur often in word associations, but subjects generally offer superordinates more quickly than subordinates. <...>

Another example of feature deletion is the dropping of [+cause] from such verbs as *kill* yielding *die*. Again, this feature is more often dropped than added, as in pairs like *kill* — *die*, *teach* — *learn*, *feed* — *eat*, *show* — *see*, etc. If we assume that for *listen* — *hear*, *listen* is identical to *hear* except for an additional [+volitive] and let the same be true for *look* — *see*, then the precedence of deletion over addition is again confirmed. The feature-deletion and addition rules, like the minimal-contrast rule, actually consist of hierarchy of rules, with single deletions and additions preferred to multiple operations.

Word associations often include near synonyms, like *house* — *home*, *odour* — *smell*, *seem* — *appear*, *thing* — *object*, etc. One sense of *home* appears to contain all the features of *house* plus some extras indicating that it is someone's usual residence, but other synonyms differ in different

ways. Although partial synonyms have not been characterized in any consistent form in terms of feature theory, it is clear that they usually have feature lists differing on only a few, possibly optional, features. The feature-deletion and addition rules, then, also produce synonyms. But the minimal-contrast rule has priority over these rules, for if the stimulus has a full antonym, it is always more frequently given as a response than is a partial synonym. <...>

The category-preservation rule. A long-standing observation in word-association literature is that stimuli tend to elicit paradigmatic responses. This is not too surprising given the previous rules, since the responses produced by those rules are always paradigmatic. But there are seeming exceptions. Common adjectives elicit other adjectives almost invariably, but uncommon adjectives do so less consistently. As Deese pointed out, this happens because the common adjectives mostly belong to antonym pairs and have minimal contrasts whereas the uncommon ones do not. The category-preservation rule is therefore a negative one: “Do not change features high on the list”, such as the feature [+noun] or [+adjective]. The rule is, in fact, only another aspect of the rates stressing that features at the bottom of the list should be altered first. <...>

The Syntagmatic Rules

Syntagmatic responses are found much less often than paradigmatic responses in word associations; and they are more difficult to characterize in rules. But there are two related rules that appear to account for the bulk of the syntagmatic responses.

The selectional feature realization rule. The list of features for a word often contains selectional features that partially characterize the meaning of the potential context of that word. The adjective *young*, for example, has selectional restrictions on the nouns it can modify, as specified in the feature [+det[+animate]be-]. Many responses to *young* are merely specific realizations of this feature — e. g. *boy*, *child*, *girl*, *man* and *people*. To produce these responses, the respondent took the partial feature list [+noun, +animate], filled it out with other features, and gave the result; the features added were often other features of *young*, since some responses were words with the feature [-adult] — *boy*, *girl*, and *child*. The rule that accounts for these responses might be started as follows: “Take the features specified by a selectional feature, adding as many features as

necessary for a surface realization; in addition, restrict yourself to the significant part of the selectional feature, the portion specifying a lexical word”.

The selectional feature realization rule accounts for the differences in the number of syntagmatic responses people give to nouns, verbs, adjectives, and so on. Notice that in the theory put forward by Chomsky nouns have no selectional features although verbs, adjectives, and other categories do. So nouns should elicit relatively few syntagmatic responses in comparison to other categories. As confirmation, we see that in Deese’s large sample of stimuli and responses nouns produced only 21 per cent syntagmatic responses, while verbs produced 48 per cent, adjectives 50 per cent, and adverbs 73 per cent. Several further predictions of this sort can be verified in data from Fillenbaum and Jones. First, the selectional features of adjectives specify the nouns they modify. So adjectives should elicit nouns most often, and they do, with nouns accounting for 80 per cent of syntagmatic responses. Similarly, the selectional features for verbs specify the subjects and objects that govern the verb. So nominals (nouns and pronouns) should occur most often here also, and they do. Verbs likewise select for the particles and prepositions that occur with them, as in *get along*, *seem like*, and *try out*: these responses also occur quite often. Prepositions select for their objects, so prepositions should elicit nominals most often as their syntagmatic responses. This is also confirmed. It is within prepositions that the dominance of the previous minimal-contrast rule over the selectional feature realization rule is best illustrated. Some prepositions have a common antonym, hence the minimal-contrast rule can be successfully applied to them. These prepositions tend to elicit far fewer nominals than other prepositions. This implies that the selectional feature realization rule is usually applied only after certain other rules failed.

The idiom-completion rule. The stimulus *cottage* often elicits *cheese*. Likewise, *whistle* elicits *stop*; *white*, *house*; *stove*, *pipe*; *justice*, *peace*; *how*, *now*; *so*, *what* and so on. The rule that generates these responses is a close cousin of the selectional feature realization rule, for it seeks out a selectional feature that has only one realization. The rule might be started: “Find an idiom of which the stimulus is a part and produce the next main word”. Without better semantic specification of idioms, this rule will have to stand as it is.

This rule might also be appealed to explain many apparently paradigmatic responses. *Ham* elicits *eggs*, *bread* elicits *butter*, and *needle*

elicits *thread*, probably not so much because the responses are paradigmatic, but because they are completions of common idioms. But carried too far, this reasoning might be used to explain the associations *here* — *there*, *high* — *low*, *now* — *then*, *man* — *woman*, etc., in exactly the same way. Instead, the phrase *here and there* appears to be common just because *here* and *there* are simple contrasts, and it is the latter fact that explains their frequent occurrence in word associations. This interpretation is further supported by Marshall's observation that, for example, *low* elicits *high* more often than *high* elicits *low*, in spite of the fact that the normal order of the two words is *high and low*. The rule usually applied in these cases is therefore the minimal-contrast rule, not the idiom-completion rule.

Syntagmatic responses are influenced in important ways by the normal left-to-right production of sentences. *Cottage* often elicits *cheese*, but *cheese* rarely elicits *cottage*, and the same is true of other idioms. The idiom-completion rule therefore works left to right, not right to left. Also consider-adjective stimuli with the selectional feature [+det[+abstract]be-]. If the selectional feature realization rule is to add as few extra features as possible to [+noun phrase, -abstract], it should often produce pronouns. But it does not. Almost all nominal responses to adjectives are full nouns. Nouns would be produced, of course, if the adjectives were taken to be in their normal pre-nominal position, where pronouns are impossible. So here again, normal left-to-right order dictates to some extent the form responses will take. Also, in the case of transitive verbs, their features restrict subjects and objects both, yet responses to transitive verbs tend to be objects rather than subjects; furthermore, the objects of transitive verbs can be produced more quickly than their subjects in restricted word-association tasks.

Nevertheless, syntagmatic associations are not merely continuous fragments of normal speech, as writers such as Saporta have assumed, but rather responses that bear only an abstract relationship to normal speech. First, note that many stimulus-response pairs would never be found in normal speech — e.g., *about* — *house*, *bread* — *butter*, *on* — *table*, etc. — for there is a missing function word in between stimulus and response. People prefer to give lexical rather than function words as responses. And the distance between syntagmatic associations and speech is also demonstrated in a comparison of (a) the nominal responses to prepositions with (b) the objects of the same prepositions in sentences people

had composed. Whereas the nominal responses are pronouns 48 per cent of the time, the objects are pronouns only 4 per cent of the time. In word association, the rule that produces a realization for [+– [–abstract]], for example, does so by adding as few other features as possible, so the responses are often semantically empty pronouns, like *it*, *them*, *him*, *her*; etc. In full utterances, on the other hand, speakers tend to fill in the feature list, producing nouns as objects. So the nominal responses and the true objects of a preposition reflect the same selectional restrictions, but the selectional feature realization rule, when applied with time limitations, is more likely to produce simpler realizations in the form of pronouns.

Thus, although syntagmatic responses first appear to be different from paradigmatic responses, they are produced by rules that belong to the same class of rules stated for paradigmatic responses — the simplicity of production rule. To repeat that rule, “Perform the least change on the lowest feature, with the restriction that the result must correspond to an English word”. To include syntagmatic responses, we must consider the operation of isolating selectional features and filling out their feature list to be a possible “least change”, an operation more difficult, however, than changing feature signs or deleting or adding features. The various expansions of this rule are obvious. <...>

In this brief account of the word-association game, I have tried to show that any successful explanation of word associations must be formulated in terms of syntactic and semantic features. In such a theory, the explanation will consist of rules that operate on features of a stimulus to produce features of an utterable response. Examination of the data now available suggests what several of these rules must be, but further work waits on more extensive studies of the semantic features in the lexicon. Because of the limited scope of this review, I have had to omit discussion of many very important studies — e. g. Deese’s work, which shows the extent of very subtle semantic information in word associations; these studies often contain rich and orderly data but have no ready explanations. Since the word-association game is so easy to play, we know plenty about the scores. We now need to find more about the rules.

Aids to the study of the text

1. What does preliminary analysis of the word-association game reveal?
2. What are the paradigmatic rules?

3. What is meant by the syntagmatic rules?
4. What predominates — paradigmatic or syntagmatic rules? Why?
5. What are the similar features of syntagmatic and paradigmatic responses?
6. What is the main aim of the word-association game suggested by H. H. Clark?

David Alan Cruse

LEXICAL SEMANTICS

A Contextual Approach to Lexical Semantics

The Meaning of a Word

It is taken as axiomatic in this book that every aspect of the meaning of a word is reflected in a characteristic pattern of semantic normality (and abnormality) in grammatically appropriate contexts. That which is not mirrored in this way is not, for us, a question of meaning; and, conversely, every difference in the semantic normality profile between two items betokens a difference of meaning. The full set of normality relations which a lexical item contracts with all conceivable contexts will be referred to as its contextual relations. We shall say, then, that the meaning of a word is fully reflected in its contextual relations; in fact, we can go further, and say that, for present purposes, the meaning of a word is constituted by its contextual relations.

In its basic form, this conception of the meaning of a word is of limited usefulness: much important information concerning word-meaning remains, as it were, latent. The picture can be made more revealing and informative in various ways. For instance, we can picture the meaning of a word as a pattern of affinities and disaffinities with all the other words in the language with which it is capable of contrasting semantic relations in grammatical contexts. Affinities are of two kinds, syntagmatic and paradigmatic. A syntagmatic affinity is established by a capacity for normal association in an utterance: there is a syntagmatic affinity, for instance, between *dog* and *barked*, since *The dog barked* is normal (a syntagmatic affinity always presupposes a particular grammatical relationship). A syntagmatic disaffinity is revealed by a syntagmatic abnormality that does not infringe grammatical constraints, as in *The lions are chirruping*. Paradigmatically, a semantic affinity between two grammatically identical words is the greater the more congruent their patterns

of syntagmatic normality. So, for instance, *dog* and *cat* share far more normal and abnormal contexts than, say, *dog* and *lamp-post*:

Arthur fed the dog / cat / ?lamp-post.
The dog / cat / ?lamp-post ran away.
The ?dog / ?cat / lamp-post got bent in the crash.
We painted the ?dog / ?cat / lamp-post red.

An extremely useful model of the meaning of a word, which can be extracted from the contextual relations, is one in which it is viewed as being made up, at least in part, of the meanings of other words. A particular word-meaning which participates in this way in the meaning of another word will be termed a semantic trait of the second word. To render this picture more informative, it is necessary to distinguish degrees and modes of participation. We shall do this initially by defining a number of statuses (degrees of necessity) of semantic traits: criterial, expected, possible, unexpected and excluded.

Criterial and excluded traits can be diagnosed by means of entailment relations between sentences: for instance, “animal” is a criterial trait of *dog* because *It’s a dog* entails *It’s an animal*, *fish* is an excluded trait of *dog* because *It’s a dog* entails *It’s not a fish*.

For the diagnosis of expected, possible and unexpected traits, the but-test is extremely useful. This utilizes the normality or abnormality of sentences of the form P, but Q. Consider the status of *can bark* as a trait of *dog*. First of all, *It’s a dog* does not entail *It can bark* (since a dog may have a congenital malformation of the larynx, or some such); hence, *can bark* is not a criterial trait. However, the following two sentences show it to be an expected trait:

- (1) *It’s a dog, but it can bark.* (odd)
- (2) *It’s a dog, but it can’t bark.* (normal)

The sort of oddness exhibited by 1 may be termed expressive paradox, since the expressive meaning carried by *but* is inappropriately deployed. The pattern of oddness is reversed in 3 and 4, showing that *can sing* is an unexpected trait of *dog*:

- (3) *It’s a dog, but it can sing.* (normal sentence, unusual dog)
- (4) *It’s a dog, but it can’t sing.* (expressive paradox)

(It is of course necessary to ascertain that, *can sing* is not an excluded trait of *dog*, the fact that *It's a dog* does not entail *It can't sing* confirms this.) A possible trait is signalled when both test sentences exhibit expressive paradox, and P and Q is normal:

(5) *It's a dog, but it's brown.* (Why shouldn't it be?)

(6) *It's a dog, but it isn't brown.* (Why should it be?)

(7) *It's a dog, and it's brown.* (normal)

At first sight, the picture of word-meaning given by patterns of affinity and disaffinity is, at least in some respects, different from the picture given by semantic traits. For instance, *cat* and *dog* have a fairly high degree of paradigmatic affinity, as they are equi-normal in a wide range of contexts:

I stroked the cat / dog.

We have a cat / dog at home.

The cat / dog died.

The children love the cat / dog.

But *cat* is an excluded trait of *dog*, since *It's a dog* entails *It's not a cat*. The two pictures are not, however, incompatible; they merely highlight different aspects of meaning. The affinity between *dog* and *cat* reveals itself in the number of equi-status or near-equi-status traits they have in common; and the differences between *dog* and *cat* appear more sharply when the affinity patterns are articulated in greater detail by means of diagnostic frames.

Although we have distinguished five discrete statuses, it must be borne in mind that the reality being described is a continuum — any discreteness is an artefact of the definitions. This is true even within the statuses that we have chosen to define by means of entailment. Probably most speakers of English would accept both of the following entailments:

It's a triangle entails *It has three angles.*

Lesley is Arthur's mother entails *Lesley is female.*

Although we shall continue to regard three-angled as a criterial trait of *triangle* and female as a criterial trait of *mother*, it must be conceded that there is a palpable difference in the degree of necessity of these two traits. A four-angled triangle is totally inconceivable — but a male mother? It is beyond imagination, in these days of biological engineering,

to conceive of a time when embryos will be implanted in a man's body, and develop, and be born — perhaps by a caesarian section? Surely not totally? No systematic use will be made here of a more criterial / less criterial distinction. However, there is a distinction that can be made within “expected” status which is of some significance in lexical semantics. Consider the relation between “adapted for flight” as a semantic trait of *bird*, and “possesses four legs” as a trait of *dog*. They are alike in that neither is criterial, both are expected:

It's a bird doesn't entail *It is adapted for flight*. (There are birds such as the ostrich and kiwi which are not adapted for flight.)

It's a dog doesn't entail *It has four legs*. (A dog may have a birth abnormality, or may lose a leg in an accident.)

It's a bird, but it's adapted for flight. (odd)

It's a bird, but it's not adapted for flight. (normal)

It's a dog, but it has four legs. (odd)

It's a dog, but it doesn't have four legs. (normal)

There is, however, a difference in the status of these two traits. There is a sense in which a dog ought to have four legs — if it does not, it is imperfect, ill-formed, not fully functional. There is no recognised sub-category of dogs for which the possession of a number of legs other than four is the norm (as there is a subcategory of cats for which the absence of a tail is the norm). Species of birds which are not adapted for flight, on the other hand, are not ill-formed — they are merely atypical. Semantic traits whose absence is regarded as a defect will be called canonical traits. Canonical traits can be distinguished from non-canonical expected traits in a number of ways:

?*The typical dog has four legs*.

?*Dogs typically have four legs*.

The typical bird is adapted for flight.

Birds are typically adapted for flight.

?*A dog that does not have four legs is not necessarily defective*.

A bird that cannot fly is not necessarily defective.

?*What kinds of dog have only three legs?*

What kinds of bird are not adapted for flight?

Canonical traits are not only to be found in words denoting living things. We could say, for instance, of *le table ronde* that it lacked a canonical trait of noun phrases in French, namely, concord in respect of gender. Likewise, a command enjoining some action which was logically

impossible, or which had already been carried out, or a lie that through ignorance on the part of the perpetrator turned out to be objectively true, can both be considered defective through the lack of a canonical trait.

The adoption of the contextual approach to word-meaning outlined in this chapter has certain inescapable consequences that some might consider to be disadvantages. One is that any attempt to draw a line between the meaning of a word and “encyclopaedic” facts concerning the extra-linguistic references of the word would be quite arbitrary; another is that there is no motivation for isolating “pragmatic meaning” as a separate domain of lexical meaning. Perhaps most importantly, it would seem that we have no grounds for believing that the meaning of a word, when viewed in this fashion, is finitely describable — without severe circumscription it is an unpromising candidate for formalisation, or representation in terms of logical or quasi-mathematical formulae. However, our conception of word-meaning has the advantage of being intuitively plausible: its scope coincides well with the pre-theoretical notion of word-meaning that anyone with a practical interest in meaning — a lexicographer, translator, or language teacher, or even a novelist or poet — is likely to have. Unwieldy it may be in certain respects, but it is surely better for a model of meaning destined to serve a descriptive as apposed to a theoretical study to err on the side of generosity of scope, rather than on the side of austerity.

While the contextual method is well-suited to the exploration of the infinite subtlety and particularity of word-meanings, it is nonetheless more infinite particularly the aim of this book to seek out and highlight anything which lends itself to generalisation, even of a limited sort, any tendency towards structure, system and recurrence, in the domain of word-meaning. <...>

Aids to the study of the text

1. How is a syntagmatic affinity established?
2. How is a syntagmatic disaffinity revealed?
3. What is the essence of the but-test?
4. Define a semantic trait of the word.
5. What is the essence of canonical traits?
6. How is it possible to distinguish canonical traits from non-canonical ones?
7. Does the contextual method have any drawbacks? What are they?

David Crystal
LINGUISTICS

Major Themes in Linguistics

Semantics

“If meaning is as important as all that”, a harsh reader might say, “then it is about time that he got to semantics”. It might indeed seem odd that linguistics should take over fifty years to get its priorities right. And to be fair, linguists and earlier scholars of language often had very clear ideas about the importance of meaning and the need for study of it. It was simply not the kind of subject which it proved easy to study. There were, to begin with, numerous preconceptions and false ideas about the nature of meaning which hindered clear thinking, but which it was difficult to get rid of because of their respectable ancestry. One was the tendency <...> to identify words and things, to think that meanings were somehow concrete entities — words would be called *dirty*, *dangerous*, *beautiful*, and so on, instead of the objects or events being referred to. This conception we have seen goes back to Plato and before, and is still with us. Another was the attempt to see the meaning wholly in terms of behavioural stimulus and response, <...> such clearly semantic considerations as personal connotations or abstract ideas show that it is not possible to determine the meaning of a linguistic event solely by observation of the environment and behaviour.

Simplifications of the idea of meaning, for example by defining it as the relationship between words and things, or as the use of language, were common in the early part of this century. And when more sophisticated accounts of meaning developed, there was a tendency to talk about the philosophical or rhetorical implications of the questions, and to state over the theoretical questions presupposed by any systematic analysis. This point can be illustrated from a number of sources — for instance, from the educational doctrines of general semantics, associated with the name of Alfred Korzybski in particular, which aimed at the general improvement of human beings by better training in the use of words and other symbols; or for the semantic analysis practised by the logical positivists; or by the rhetorical and literary discussion of

the concept by C. K. Ogden and I. A. Richards in the *Meaning of Meaning*, published in 1923. Another example of this very general theorizing was in the debates about the relationship between language and reality, carried on by psychologists, philosophers, anthropologists and linguists alike. In particular, there was the question of whether there are universal concepts existing independently of language, or whether language imposes a conceptual framework on our thinking, without our noticing it. “We dissect nature along lines laid down by our native languages”, said Benjamin Lee Whorf; and his arguments, along with those of Edward Sapir, led to the development of a position known as the Sapir-Whorf hypothesis, which distracted attention from more central and testable aspects of semantics for a number of years. The history of semantics is a peculiarly complex one, because so many fields of study are involved: it is well surveyed by Stephen Ullman, in his book *Semantics*, published in 1962. It is clear from this that the subject of meaning is by no means a discovery of modern linguistics; but at the same time, little of the early work has proved to be of permanent value.

There was, then, much theorizing, but little strict theory. There was little attempt to actually analyse the structure of a language to determine in detail the way in which it parcelled out reality, or to see how words (and other units) defined each other's meaning in various ways. The use of semantic field techniques was a European development of the thirties which proved to be of value, but it was very limited in scope. This was a method whereby one studied the different sets of words used by different languages to identify the features of a particular area of experience — such as establishing how the English vocabulary of colour cuts up the colour spectrum, and seeing how this differs from the way French, or Japanese, or Welsh might do it. <...>

More recent than this is the attempt to study all the various relationships of meaning which exist between words in a particular language, an approach, known as structural semantics. Some of these relationships were of course traditionally taught under such headings as antonyms and synonyms; but research has shown that there are far more kinds of relationship binding the meanings of words together than this old pair of labels suggests. However, the problem of how to analyse words which have more than one meaning; the problem of defining idioms accurately; the problem how much detail to allow into the

definition of a word; the problem of styles of usage affecting the meanings of words: these are all questions which have received no satisfactory explanation, and an adequate semantic theory, which would have to account for such things, is accordingly a long way off. The existence of large dictionaries listing the meanings of words in a language should not blind us to this fact. There is nothing infallible about a dictionary (or a grammar, for that matter). All dictionaries are artefacts; they have principles about what words they will include and what they will leave out, about how to define meanings, about the order in which meanings should be defined and how they should be grouped, about ways of presenting pronunciation and spelling, about ways of dealing with etymologies, about how much information to introduce concerning stylistic or idiomatic information and so on. It is extremely instructive to take two dictionaries and compare their treatment of any set of words. The differences are remarkable; and for intelligent use, they should be evaluated.

But much of this is fringe linguistics. Lexicography (dictionary-writing) is one of the applications of language study, putting semantic information over in a certain way. Obtaining that information in the first place is independent of any particular dictionary format. And semantics, for the linguist, must be primarily concerned with the problems of how the semantic system hypothesized for a language is organized, and what kind of model might most usefully be constructed in order to facilitate analysis. At the moment, there have been few positive suggestions. There has been some discussion about procedures for obtaining semantic information; a few suggested techniques for analysing certain areas of meaning have been made (such as componential analysis, which is used a great deal in the analysis of kinship systems in anthropology); and there have been one or two theoretical excursions of a highly programmatic kind. <...>

Aids to the study of the text

1. What is understood by the term “word meaning”?
2. What are the general approaches to word meaning?
3. What are the aims of semantics according to D. Crystal?

John Rupert Firth

PAPERS IN LINGUISTICS 1934—1951

Modes of meaning

The study of meaning is a permanent interest of scholarship. It has been pursued in all the languages of the major civilizations and in ancient times, especially in Sanskrit, Greek, and Latin, including the Latin of the Medieval Scholastics — Duns Scotus, Thomas of Erfurt. In English the obvious phrase “the meaning of meaning” is well known as the title of a work on the definition of knowledge, a matter which is not under examination in the present essay. There are many other ways, of applying the word “meaning” in English, including the usages of logicians, psychologists, sociologists, mathematicians, and lexicographers. The use of the word “meaning” is subject to the general rule that each word when used in a new context is a new word. The disciplines and techniques are those of general linguistics which are designed for empirical analysis and do not necessarily have a point of departure in other disciplines such as biology, psychology, literary criticism, or in a school of metaphysics. The constructs or schemata of linguistics enable us to handle isolates that may be called language events. These systematic constructs are neither immanent nor transcendent, but just language turned back on itself. The present essay is an attempt to sketch the framework of a language of description in English about English for those who use English, to illustrate what I understand by linguistic analysis, and especially to show the dangers of an over-facile superficial use of the word “stylistics”, without an adequate logical syntax or even without considering the essential prerequisites of linguistics. The disciplines and techniques of linguistics are directed to assist us in making statements of meaning. Indeed, the main concern of descriptive linguistics is to make statements of meaning. <...>

Even in a dictionary, the lexical meaning of any given word is achieved by multiple statements of meaning at different levels. First, at the orthographic level the group of letters, *peer*, is distinguished from the group *pier*, and both of these from *pear*, *apir*, and *pare*. Next, by means of some kind of phonetic notation, the pronunciation is stated, and new identities arise. At least two grammatical designations are possible for *peer* — noun, substantive, or verb — and by making such statements at

the grammatical level a further component of meaning is made explicit. Formal and etymological meaning may be added, together with social indications of usage such as *colloquial, slang, nautical, vulgar, poetical*.

To make statements of meaning in terms of linguistics, we may accept the language event as a whole and then deal with it at various levels, sometimes in a descending order, beginning with social context and proceeding through syntax and vocabulary to phonology and even phonetics, and at other times in the opposite order, which will be adopted here since the main purpose is the exposition of linguistics as a discipline and technique for the statement of meanings without reference to such dualisms and dichotomies as word and idea, overt expressions and covert concepts, language and thought, subject and object. In doing this I must not be taken to exclude the concept of mind, or to imply an embracing of materialism to avoid a foolish bogey of mentalism.

At the phonetic level no case has yet been made out for systematic sound symbolism or onomatopoeia in general human terms. I have myself made experiments with speakers of many languages belonging to all the principal races and have found, with Koehler, evidence of some correlation of sounds with shapes (sense of feeling them or of drawing them). The experiment consisted in drawing two shapes in line, one of a round bellying shape, “clumpy”, and the other a sharp angular zigzag of points prickling in all directions. Two words were then offered in sound and in roughly phonetic spelling as their names, viz *kikeriki* and *oombooloo*. The only cases when *kikeriki* was chosen as a suitable name for the clumpy figure occurred when someone wished to enliven the proceeding and provide amusement, which he invariably did. <...>

The following sentences show that part of the meaning of the word *ass* in modern colloquial English can be by collocation:

- (1) An ass like Bagson might easily do that.
- (2) He is an ass.
- (3) You silly ass!
- (4) Don't be an ass!

One of the meanings of *ass* is its habitual collocation with an immediately preceding *you silly*, and with other phrases of address or of personal reference. Even if you said *An ass has been frightfully mauled at the Zoo*, a possible retort would be, *What on earth was he doing?*

There are only limited possibilities of collocation with preceding adjectives, among which the commonest are *silly*, *obstinate*, *stupid*, *awful*, occasionally *egregious*. *Young* is much more frequently found than *old*. The plural form is not very common.

It must be pointed out that meaning by collocation is not at all the same thing as contextual meaning, which is the functional relation of the sentence to the processes of a context of situation in the context of culture.

In the language of Lear's limericks, *man* is generally preceded by *old*, never by *young*. *Person* is collocated with *old* and *young*. There are only four *old ladies* — of Prague, of France, of Winchelsea, and the one "whose folly" rhymes with "holly". There is only one *girl*, "a young girl of Majorca, whose aunt was a very fast walker". One of the "meanings" of *man* in this language is to be immediately preceded by *old* in collocation of the type: *There was an old Man of...*, *Who* (or *Whose*)..., in which names like *Kamschatka* or *Jamaica* or *the East* frequently complete the "of" phrase. The collocability of *lady* is most frequently with *young*, but *person* with either *old* or *young*. In this amusing language there is no *boy* or *young man* or *woman*, neither are there any plurals for *man*, *person*, or *lady*.

This kind of study of the distribution of common words may be classified into general or usual collocations and more restricted technical or personal collocations. The commonest sentences in which the words *horse*, *cow*, *pig*, *swine*, *dog* are used with adjectives in nominal phrases, and also with verbs in the simple present, indicate characteristic distributions in collocability which may be regarded as a level of meaning in describing the English of any particular social group or indeed of one person. The word *time* can be used in collocations with or without articles, determinatives, or pronouns. And it can be collocated with *saved*, *spent*, *wasted*, *frittered away*, with *presses*, *flies*, and with a variety of particles, even with *no*. Just as phonetic, phonological, and grammatical forms well established and habitual in any close social group provide a basis for the mutual expectancies of words and sentences at those levels, and also the sharing of these common features, so also the study of the usual collocations of a particular literary form or genre or of a particular author makes possible a clearly defined and precisely stated contribution to what I have termed the spectrum of descriptive linguistics, which handles and states meaning by dispersing it in a range of techniques working at a series of levels.

The statement of meaning by collocation and various collocabilities does not involve the definition of word-meaning by means of further sentences in shifted terms. Meaning by collocation is an abstraction at the syntagmatic level and is not directly concerned with the conceptual or idea approach to the meaning of words. One of the meanings of *night* is its collocability with *dark*, and of *dark*, of course, collocation with *night*. This kind of mutuality may be paralleled in most languages and has resulted in similarities of poetic diction in literatures sharing common classical sources. <...>

Aids to the study of the text

1. Prove that meaning is a permanent interest of scholars.
2. What levels of meaning are singled out by J. R. Firth?
3. What is understood by meaning at the level of collocation?
4. What is the difference between contextual meaning and meaning by collocation?
5. Does meaning by collocation have any peculiarities at the syntagmatic level?

What are they?

William de Groot

CLASSIFICATION OF WORD-GROUPS

I Introduction

The classification of word-groups is a much neglected subject. Most syntactic descriptions of a language distinguish different types of word-group without making a systematic attempt to classify them. They usually distinguish the so-called subject-predicate group, the coordinative group, and a variety of others, such as verb-object, prepositional phrase, et cetera. <...>

In his book *Language* Leonard Bloomfield presents the following classification, illustrated by means of examples taken from English:

A. Endocentric constructions, 1. coordinative (or serial), and 2. subordinative (or attributive).

B. Exocentric constructions. <...>

Bloomfield's classification is made by means of criteria of distribution, i. e. syntactic use, in about the following way.

A group is called coordinative, if it has the same distribution as two or more of its members: *boys and girls, bread and butter; coffee, tea, and milk.*

A group is called subordinative, if it has the same distribution as one of its members: *fresh milk, very fresh.* In *fresh milk* the member *milk* is called the "head", and *fresh* the "adjunct".

Coordinative and subordinative groups are called "endocentric".

A group is called exocentric, if it has a distribution different from either of the members, e. g. *John ran; with John; if John ran away, (greater) than John.* <...>

II Distinguishing between types of word-groups

In dealing with classifications of word-groups, one has to bear in mind constantly, first, that each language has a system of its own, and, second, that — whatever criterion of classification we apply — the number of distinguishable types varies considerably from one language to another. I shall illustrate this by giving what I consider a fairly complete list of the main types existing in Chinese, Latin, and English. <...>

English

The number of main types is about 14, and some of them can be sub-divided according to part of speech of the members.

A. **Coordinative group.** *Men, women, (and) children; ...laughed, cried, shouted; red, white, and blue (flowers); ...and / or...; before or after (the war).*

B. **Non-coordinative group, non-predicative group.**

(1) Descriptive groups, so-called modified with modifier.

This category falls into several sub-types, first, according to the part-of speech of the modified, and second, according to the part of speech, or the part of speech and a certain morphological category of the modifier, e. g. the possessive of a noun (*John's house*).

The head is:

a noun: *John the Baptist; red flowers; barking dogs; two flowers; these flowers; a flower; John's house; the above remark; flowers from*

Paris; the children who were ready; also I; even John. (Most of these groups can be made predicative by putting the adjunct after the noun, and setting it off by breaks: *John, the Baptist, died; the dogs; barking furiously, (ran into the garden); the children, who were ready, (left).* Such predicative groups are classified below under C (2b) “head with apposition”;

an adjective: *very happy*;

a numeral: *nearly seven*;

an adverb: *very happily*;

a verb; the adjunct may be an adverb, *walk carefully*; a prepositional phrase, *walk in the garden*; a subordinate clause, *walk, if you like*.

(2) Transitive verb with “resultative” adjective (or equivalent noun), *(he) painted (the door) green; take off (your coat); (they) made (him) president.* (This group is usually a “split group”, the object being put between verb and adjective.)

(3) Intransitive verb with “descriptive” adjective, *(he) left — angry; having left — angry, (he became ill); (he) came home — wet.*

(4) Connective groups:

(a) Coordinating conjunction with a word of any part of speech, *(Mary) and — John; (Mary) or — John; neither — Mary* (nor John).

(b) Subordinating “conjunctive”:

– Preposition with personal pronoun in the objective case (or equivalent noun, etc.), *with him, with John.*

– Subordinating conjunction with clause, *if — John went away.*

(5) Copulative verb (or equivalent) with complement: *(He) was — ill; (she) was elected — president.*

(6) Verb with object (i. e. personal pronoun in the objective case, or equivalent), *(I) saw — him.*

(The equivalent of the verb may be “verb with object”. If so, its object is called “indirect object”, *(I) gave him the book.* *Him* is object of *gave the book*, and called “indirect” object.

The equivalent of the object may be a group of a special type, “objective with verbal”, which is classified next, under 7), *(I) saw him come down the stairs.*)

(7) Objective with verbal, *(I saw) him — come down the stairs; (I saw) him — coming down the stairs.* So-called “accusative with infinitive”.

(8) Auxiliary verb with verbal (i. e. with infinitive, ed-form, or ing-form), *(I) have — seen; (I) am — seeing; (I) shall — see, (I) will — see; (I) do — see, (I) didn't — see*. So-called “compound verbs”.

(9) Clause with attitudinal adjunct; the adjunct is:

(a) An adverb, *he will probably come; fortunately, they were away at the time*.

(b) A so-called conjunction, *this, however, is a debatable point; the books were, of course, left in the library*.

(c) A “final”, *he will come, eh? you aren't ready, are you?*

C. **Predicative groups.**

(1) Independent, i. e. frequently used as the whole word-content of a sentence. We call it 'the clause'. One member is a personal pronoun in the subjective case (or equivalent: noun, etc.), the other member is a so-called “finite verb”, *he — left, dogs — bark*

(2) Dependent, i. e., normally not used as the whole word-content of a sentence:

(a) Subjective with verbal, so-called, “absolute construction”: *he — being a bachelor, (his sister stayed with him); human nature — being what it is, (you couldn't have expected anything else)*.

(b) Head with appositive. The appositive is set off by breaks. It usually follows the head: *the boy, angry, (left); John, the Baptist, (died); the children, who were ready, (left)*. (Cf. *the angry boy; John the Baptist; the children who were ready (left)*).

The preceding lists were intended to show, first, how, at a first and preliminary stage of investigation and description, distinctions can be made between types of word-group within the same language, and, second, that the result is not the same for different languages. There is a noticeable difference in the types of groups, and in the number of groups. As to the last point, we stated that Chinese has four types, none of which present clearly distinguishable sub-types, whereas Latin has about sixteen, and English about fourteen main groups, some of which fall into a number of clearly distinguishable sub-types.

Consequently, the procedure applied so far was only a matter of preliminary distinction. The next question, i. e. the problem of the criteria applied, and the problem of classification, will be dealt with in the following chapter.

III The problem of classification

*Man hat die Telle in der Hand,
Fehlt, leider, nur das geistige Band.*

In dealing with classification of word-groups, or of units of any other kind in a given language, it is not unfrequently overlooked, first, that units of any kind can be classified in different ways, second, that a classification is intended to serve a certain purpose, and, third, that the merits of a given classification depend (a) upon the importance of the purpose, and (b) upon whether it serves the purpose, or not.

What I have in mind, with regard to word-groups, is illustrated — at least in some respects — by the preceding.

It is obvious that Ries, Bloomfield, and Trubetzkoy classify word-groups in different ways; apparently, different criteria are used for distinction. In none of the three cases is the purpose for which the classification is made clearly stated. <...>

Distribution

It is one of the merits of Bloomfield to have shown the importance of distribution as a criterion for classifying word-groups. Before discussing distribution as a feature of types of groups, I should like to formulate two objections to Bloomfield's procedure.

From Bloomfield's own point of view, it would, in my opinion, have been more logical and fruitful to start with a distinction between different distribution of the groups themselves, instead of starting with different distribution of members. The result of the latter procedure is that his category of "exocentric constructions" is a catch-all, comprising, for instance, the predicative group *John ran* and the connective group *with John*. If the distribution of the groups themselves had been taken into account first, especially by noticing that *John ran* is a "favourite sentence-form", the predicative group would have received its unique position in English syntax. <...>

A minor objection concerns the terms "endocentric" and "exocentric", which I consider unnecessary neologisms, but this question depends, perhaps, on the other question whether a special name is desirable for what I have called the catch-all, or not.

Other objections, concerning the value of his procedure from the point of view of structural linguistics, will be discussed below.

In dealing with distribution as a feature of groups, I distinguish between the distribution of the group, and the distribution of its members.

(1) ***Distribution of the group***

For this purpose we have to distinguish the various types of distribution of syntactic units in general. A syntactic unit is either a word or a word-group.

There are only two main types of syntactic distribution. The unit is used either as an independent, or as a member of a word-group. An independent is used either as the whole word-content of a sentence, *Alas Mary! John died*, or as a part of it, *Alas, Mary, John died*. The last sentence has three independents. They are not members of a word-group. They are not, for instance, members of a coordinative group. The criterion, in this case, is that the use of coordinating conjunctions would be impossible: *Alas and Mary and John died*; this distinguishes the combination from the coordinative group *Eat, drink, be merry*, into which coordinative conjunctions may be inserted: *Eat, drink, and be merry. Eat, or drink, or be merry*.

A member of a word-group is either a head, or an adjunct, or a conjunct, or a coordinate. The difference is defined in terms of syntactic omissibility of members of the group. As syntactic omissibility is a matter of degree, no rigid lines of demarcation can be drawn between the three categories, but the distinction itself is of fundamental importance. The test to be applied is the omission test.

A head is defined as a member that cannot be omitted without affecting the structure of the rest of the sentence, whereas the other member can be omitted in the same sense. In the sentence *I have fresh milk*, the word *milk* is head of the group *fresh milk*. *I have milk* is possible, *I have fresh* is impossible.

An adjunct is defined as the omissible member of a group of which the other member is not omissible, e. g. *fresh* in *fresh milk*.

A conjunct is defined as a non-omissible member of a group of which the other member is equally non-omissible, e. g. both *John* and *ran* in *John ran*, or both *with* and *John* in *with John*.

A coordinate is defined as a member of a word-group of which each member is omissible. Examples are *men*, *women*, and *children* in the group *men, women, children (cried)*.

It is obvious that each of these five types of distribution, and several combinations of them, is a typical feature of some type of group in some language. <...>

(3) *Distribution of members of the group*

This is Bloomfield's basic criterion in classifying word-groups.

It is obvious that it is a typical feature of many types of groups. For examples I may refer to the discussion of Bloomfield's classification in the *Introduction*.

In-the-following I shall use the terms "coordinative group" (consisting of coordinates, as defined above), "adjunctive group" (consisting of a head and an adjunct), and "conjunctive group" (consisting of two conjuncts). I believe that this terminology is preferable to the use of endocentric and exocentric constructions. Its disadvantage is that "coordinative" is used both in a structural and in a purely distributional sense. As, however, the two concepts in practice apply to exactly the same groups, I do not believe that there will be any ambiguity. I may add that in analyzing the structure of word-groups, and defining types in terms of distribution, excellent work has been done especially by Ch. F. Hockett, Rulon S. Wells, and Zellig S. Harris. See e. g., R. S. Wells, *Immediate constituents*, Language 23, 1947, 81—117; Ch. F. Hockett, *Problems of Morpheme Analysis*, Language 23, 1947, 321—343; Zellig S. Harris, *Methods in Structural Linguistics*, Chicago, 1947.

Classification according to meanings

It can, in my opinion, hardly be doubted that the word-groups of a given language can be classified according to their meanings no less satisfactorily than according to any other kind of feature. There are, of course, as everywhere in a language, borderline cases. I have already remarked that the degree-character of omissibility creates many borderline cases in the application of criteria of distribution. There are equally borderline cases between parts of speech, between syntactically free and fixed order, and so on.

For establishing meanings as features of types of groups, we have to start from the fundamental distinction between attitudinal and referential meanings. <...>

The distinction is fundamental, among other things, because it pervades the whole structure of a language system on all its main levels. An

attitudinal meaning is defined as the expression of an attitude of the speaker to something, e. g. *alas*. A referential meaning is defined as merely denoting, or referring to, something, either by naming it (*John, boy, red, arrive, with, if*), or by pointing it out (*he, this, so*).

The attitude expressed is either “intellectual”, i. e. a belief in the existence or non-existence of something (*Vivit. He lives.*), or “non-intellectual”, e. g. an emotion (*alas*), a wish to draw somebody’s attention (the vocative, *Brute*), a wish that the hearer do something (the imperative, *veni*), et cetera.

The same distinction largely parallels the difference between the two constituents or “levels” of the sentence, i. e. words and intonation (or, better, sentence-form), in that intonation is never referential, but always attitudinal, and words are referential and / or attitudinal. Merely referential are *John, boy, red*, etc. Merely attitudinal are *yes* and *no* (intellectual, expressing a belief in truth or falsity of a statement), and *alas* (expressing an emotional attitude). Both referential and attitudinal are vocatives (*Brute*), imperatives (*veni*), and, in languages such as Sanskrit, Greek, and Latin, the finite verb, *venio, venit* (expressing a belief; *venit*, I believe that he is coming).

On the level of the parts of speech, the distinction parallels the difference between interjections on the one hand, and, with a few exceptions, all other parts of speech on the other.

On the level of morphology, it distinguishes, in the system of the cases of the noun in Latin, the vocative from all other cases; in the morphological system of the verb, the imperative and the finite verb from the infinitive and participles.

Even on the level of the vocabulary it plays a certain role, e. g. in the difference between *children* and *brats*, and between *poor* in the sense of “without money”, *a poor man*, and for the expression of an attitude of the speaker, *poor man!*

The distinction is of no less importance with regard to features of word-groups. It may well be that all languages have an opposition between predicative, i. e. attitudinal, and non-predicative groups. The group *dogs bark* is clearly attitudinal, predicative, and the group *barking dogs* is clearly referential. It may be added that a similar distinction must be made between different uses of the same type, of group, for instance between referential use of *me miseram* in *vocat me miseram*, and attitudinal use of the same group in *Me miseram!* (accusative of exclamation). <...>

On the basis of this fundamental distinction, we may distinguish different kinds of attitudinal and different kinds of referential meanings as features of groups. I need merely recall the “enumeration”, presented by coordinative groups, “description” by the group modified-modifier, “relation to something” by connective groups, and so on.

I shall give one example of a type of group that has features on several levels, as distinguished above, in order to illustrate my points, first, that in a complete description of a language all these features should be described, and, second, that, in a given language, the group can satisfactorily be defined in terms of one, or a limited number of different features.

My example is the coordinative group in English.

A typical auditory feature of the group, which it has in common with only very few other groups, is the segmentation by means of breaks, in English script indicated by commas. It may be noticed that the break is less marked, or optional, before a coordinative conjunction, e. g. before *and* in *men, women and children (cried)*, but this is of secondary importance. The group has a unique auditory feature in what may be described as “even stress” on all members.

The members of the group are not separable (unless by “insertion”, defined as a separate attitudinal expression: *Men, I think, women and children, cried*).

It is typical of the group that the order of its members is syntactically irrelevant: *children, women, men cried*.

It is a unique feature of the group that it may have more than two members.

It is typical of the group also that, with very few exceptions which can easily be formulated (*Mother and I went away*), the part of speech of the members is the same. Even some morphological categories are the same, e. g. the case of the personal pronoun (*I saw him and her*), the case of the noun (*John's and Mary's books*), and the general category of the verb (*singing and swinging*). There are very few groups in English of which both members may be the same part of speech: (*a*) *bird's nest*, (*I*) *shall see (him)*, *very happily*, but in all of them there is some difference, so that I believe that, in English, the coordinative group can satisfactorily and completely be defined in terms of the part of speech and the morphological category of the members.

Distribution is a unique feature of the group also in that each member is omissible. A difficulty, however, arises here by the fact that

“omissibility” or, in Bloomfield’s terminology, “the same” or “not the same distribution as that of the whole group” is a matter of degree. This is one of the weak points in the use of the criterion of distribution, which I shall not discuss in detail. To give one example: in *milk and scones were on the table*, strictly speaking neither *milk* nor *and scones* nor even *scones* is omissible, and neither *milk* nor *and scones* has exactly the same distribution as the group *milk and scones*.

Last, but not least, meaning is a unique feature of the group, which may be formulated by saying that it presents an enumeration of similar things. However we wish to formulate this feature of meaning, there can hardly be any doubt about the fact that it is typical of this type of group, and of no other.

Meaning, form, and distribution

In order to avoid misunderstandings, and to warn against overestimating the importance of distribution as a criterion for structural classification, I wish to say here a few words on a subject to which I intend to return in more detail, namely the relations between meaning, auditory form, and syntactic distribution.

I have called both form and distribution “correlates of meaning”. Generally speaking, we may say that form is a *means* to convey meaning, and that distribution is mainly the *result* of two factors: the meaning of the given word or group, and the semantic structure of the sentence, the “sentence-pattern”, in the given language. The word or word-group is useable, or not useable, or useable under certain conditions only, as a certain member of a certain sentence pattern, if its meaning agrees with the semantic function of that member. The key fits, or does not fit, into the lock.

Consequently, both form and distribution are indicative of meaning both to the hearer and to the linguist. This is why I have called form and distribution “identificational features” of word-groups.

Neither form nor distribution are completely reliable indicators of meanings, or of similarities and dissimilarities between meanings.

Two words, for instance, may have the same form, but a different meaning, if they are homonyms, e. g. *hair* and *hare*. They may have a different form, but the same meaning; if they are “exact synonyms”, e. g. *gorse* and *furze*.

Distribution is not a reliable indicator either, because it is not only the result of meaning and sentence-pattern, but also of “disturbing factors”, such as arbitrary idiom, and what may be called “personal idiom”, as poetical licenses.

Moreover, not all words that have the same syntactic distribution have the same meaning, e. g. on the lexical level, words belonging to the same part of speech: *Peter* and *John*; *red*, *blue*, and *yellow*; *boy* and *girl*, and, conversely, not all words with different distribution have a different meaning, e. g. *grosse* and *grosser* in German *der grosse Mann* and *ein grosser Mann*. <...>

Aids to the study of the text

1. What is the criterion of Bloomfield's classification of word-groups?
2. What is the difference between coordinative and subordinative groups in Bloomfield's classification?
3. What are the distinguishing features of endocentric and exocentric word-groups?
4. Enumerate the main types of word-groups in English.
5. Are the types of groups and the number of groups the same in different languages?
6. What is understood by the term “head” of the word-group?
7. What are the author's objections to Bloomfield's classification?
8. Review the definition of the terms “adjunct”, “conjunct”, “coordinate” in the author's classification.
9. What criterion of classification of word-groups does the author suggest?
10. How does the author understand the criterion of classification according to meaning?
11. What is meant by “identification features” of word-groups?
12. Is distribution a completely reliable indicator of meaning?

Robert Lado

LINGUISTICS ACROSS CULTURES

Chapter I. The necessity for a systematic comparison of languages and cultures

1 Introduction: fundamental assumption

1.1. The fundamental assumption guiding the preparation of teaching materials at the English Language Institute of the University of

Michigan is given by Fries: “The most effective materials are those that are based upon a scientific description of the language to be learned, carefully compared with a parallel description of the native language of the learner.”

Comparisons of English and several other languages were also made in preparation for the English textbooks of the A. C. L. S., and various articles dealing with partial comparisons, of languages appear in the journal *Language Learning* as a contribution to foreign language learning research.

1.2. The same assumption, that in the comparison between native and foreign language lies the key to ease or difficulty in foreign language learning, was applied to the preparation of language achievement tests by Lado.

1.3. A practical confirmation of the validity of our assumption has come from the work of linguists who study the effect of close contact between languages in bilingual situations. They report that many linguistic distortions heard among bilinguals correspond to describable differences in the languages involved. Extensive studies have been carried out by Haugen and Weinreich in this area.

1.4. Research in the psychology of language and in language learning in educational psychology has not as a rule made any conscious systematic use of assumptions of importance of the native language: habits in foreign language learning. Yet there is every reason to believe that real progress could be made if such assumptions were to become part of the planning in language learning research.

1.5. Implied in “Fries” assumption for effective teaching materials, and as observed in bilingual studies and in testing research, is the fundamental assumption of this book: that individuals tend to transfer the forms and meanings, and the distribution of forms and meanings of their native language and culture to the foreign language and culture — both productively when attempting to speak the language and to act in the culture, and receptively when attempting to grasp and understand the language and the culture as practiced by natives.

2 Significance for teaching

2.1. The teacher of foreign languages may wonder why he has to go through the painful business of comparing languages. Is it not his re-

sponsibility simply to teach a foreign language? Is it not enough that he should know that foreign language?

Not if our assumption is correct. We assume that the student who comes in contact with a foreign language will find some features of it quite easy and others extremely difficult. Those elements that are similar to his native language will be simple for him, and those elements that are different will be difficult. The teacher who has made a comparison of the foreign language with the native language of the students will know better what the real learning problems are and can better provide for teaching them. He gains an insight into the linguistic problems involved that cannot easily be achieved otherwise.

In practice a teacher may be called upon to apply this knowledge under various circumstances. He may be asked to evaluate materials before they are adopted for use. He may be asked to prepare new materials. He may have to supplement the textbook assigned to his class. And he will at all times need to diagnose accurately the difficulties his pupils have in learning each pattern.

2.2. Evaluating the language and culture content of a textbook

On the surface, most textbooks look pretty much alike. Publishers see to it that their books look attractive and that the titles sound enticing. That is part of their business. If a teacher is professionally trained, however, he will be able to look beyond attractive illustrations and handsome printing and binding.

He should be able to see whether the book presents the language and culture patterns that form the system to be studied, and does not merely list disparate items from here and there. He should also be able to discern whether the book gives due emphasis to those patterns that are difficult because they are different from those of the native language of the students.

Some books, advertised as panaceas for easy learning of a foreign language, simply present a few patterns that are similar to the native language and spend a good many chapters, sometimes an entire volume, on them. The untrained teacher and student may get the impression that the book does simplify the learning of the language. But in reality it does not teach the foreign language; it merely entertains teacher and student in easy but unproductive activity. That weakness is immediately laid bare by comparing the two languages.

Textbooks should be graded as to grammatical structure, pronunciation, vocabulary, and cultural content. And grading can be done best after the kind of comparison we are presenting here.

2.3. Preparing new teaching materials

More and more the teacher is faced with the need to prepare textbooks and other teaching materials that are up to date and meet the needs of the particular students he is interested in. The most important new thing in the preparation of teaching materials is the comparison of native and foreign language and culture in order to find the hurdles that really have to be surmounted in the teaching. It will soon be considered quite out of date to begin writing a textbook without having previously compared the two systems involved.

Other advances in techniques of presentation of language and culture should not be neglected, but the linguistic comparison is basic and really inescapable if we wish to make progress and not merely reshuffle the same old materials.

2.4. Supplementing inadequate materials

Commonly, the teacher finds that he is given an assigned textbook that he finds inadequate both as to linguistic and cultural content. The teacher who has systematically compared the two languages will be able to prepare supplementary exercises on those patterns which are important or difficult and have been overlooked or treated inadequately in the book.

2.5. Diagnosing difficulties

The teacher will at all times in working with his students be faced with the need to diagnose quickly and accurately the problems troubling a student. Much misinformation and many misleading explanations can be and are given students in the attempt to help them. Knowing not only what the pattern is, but knowing precisely what feature in that pattern is troubling the student and what different feature he is substituting can lead to a simple hint or pointer that may solve an otherwise baffling situation. The professionally trained teacher should notice not only a “foreign” accent or an “incorrect” form but a clear-cut, specific distortion of a sound, construction, or cultural pattern.

Aids to the study of the text

1. Why is comparison between native and foreign language necessary?
2. How can you illustrate transfer of the sound-forms and meanings of Russian words to English observed among Russian learners of English?
3. Why is it not sufficient for a teacher to know the foreign language he is teaching?
4. How can a teacher apply his knowledge of the native language of his students?

Geoffrey Leech

SEMANTICS

Seven Types of Meaning

Some people would like semantics to pursue the study of meaning in a wide sense of “all that is communicated by language”; others (among them most modern writers within the framework of general linguistics) limit it in practice to the study of logical or conceptual meaning, <...>. It needs no great insight to see that semantics in the former, wider sense can lead us once again into the void from which Bloomfield retreated with understandable misgivings — the description of all that may be the object of human knowledge or belief. On the other hand, we can, by carefully distinguishing types of meaning, show how they all fit into the total composite effect of linguistic communication, and show how methods of study appropriate to one type may not be appropriate to another.

On this basis, I shall break down meaning in its widest sense into seven different ingredients, giving primary importance to logical meaning or (as I shall prefer to call it) conceptual meaning, <...>. The six other types I shall consider are connotative meaning, stylistic meaning, affective meaning, reflected meaning, collocative meaning, and thematic meaning.

Conceptual Meaning

Conceptual meaning (sometimes called denotative or cognitive meaning) is widely assumed to be the central factor in linguistic communication, and I think it can be shown to be integral to the essential functioning of language in a way that other types of meaning are not (which is not to say that conceptual meaning is always the most important element of an act of linguistic communication). My chief reason for assigning priority of conceptual meaning is that it has a complex and sophisticated organization of a kind which may be compared with, and crossrelated to, similar organization on the syntactic and phonological levels of language. In particular, I would like to point to two structural principles that seem to lie at the basis of all linguistic patterning: the principle of *contractiveness* and the principle of *constituent structure*. Contrastive features underlie the classification of sounds in phonology,

for example, in that any label we apply to a sound defines it *positively*, by what features it possesses, and also by implication *negatively*, by what features it does not possess. Thus the phonetic symbol [b] may be explicated as representing a bundle of contrastive features +BILABIAL, +VOICE, +STOP, –NASAL; the assumption being that the distinctive sounds of phonemes of a language are identifiable in terms of binary, or largely binary, contrasts. In a similar way, the conceptual meanings of a language seem to be organized largely in terms of contrastive features, so that (for example) the meaning of the word *woman* could be specified as +HUMAN, –MALE, +ADULT, as distinct from, say, *boy*, which would be defined +HUMAN, +MALE, –ADULT.

The second principle, that of constituent structure, is the principle by which larger linguistic units are built up out of smaller units; or (looking at it from the opposite point of view) by which we are able to analyse a sentence syntactically into its constituent parts, moving from its immediate constituents through a hierarchy of sub-division to its ultimate constituents or smallest syntactic elements. <...>

Connotative Meaning

More of what is distinctive about conceptual meaning will appear when we contrast it with connotative meaning. Connotative meaning is the communicative value an expression has by virtue of what it *refers to*, over and above its purely conceptual content. To a large extent, the notion of *reference* overlaps with conceptual meaning. If the word *woman* is defined conceptually by three features (+HUMAN, –MALE, +ADULT), then the three properties “human”, “adult”, and “female” must provide a criterion of the correct use of that word. These contrastive features, translated into real world terms, become attributes of the referent (that which the word refers to). But there is a multitude of additional, non-criterial properties that we have learnt to expect a referent of woman to possess. They include not only physical characteristics (“biped”, “having a womb”), but also psychological and social properties (“gregarious”, “subject to material instinct”), and may extend to features which are merely *typical* rather than *invariable* concomitants of womanhood (“capable of speech”, “experienced in cooking”, “shirt-or-dress-wearing”). Still further, connotative meaning can embrace the “putative properties” of the referent, due to the viewpoint adopted by an individual, or a group of people or a whole society. So in the past woman has been

burdened with such attributes (“frail”, “prone to tears”, “cowardly”, “emotional”, “irrational”, “inconstant”) as the dominant male has been pleased to impose on her, as well as with more becoming qualities as “gentle”, “compassionate”, “sensitive”, “hard-working”. Obviously, connotations are apt to vary from age to age and from society to society. A hundred years ago, “non-trouser-wearing” must have seemed a thoroughly definitive connotation of the word *woman* and its translation equivalents in European languages, just as in many non-western societies today womankind is associated with attributes foreign to our own way of thinking. It is equally obvious that connotations will vary, to some extent, from individual to individual within the same speech community: to an English-speaking misogynist *woman* will have many incomplimentary associations not present in the minds of speakers of a more feminist persuasion.

It will be clear that in talking about connotation, I am in fact talking about the real world experience one associates with an expression when one uses or hears it. Therefore the boundary between conceptual and connotative meaning is coincident with that nebulous but crucial boundary <...> between language and the real world. In confirmation of the feeling that connotation is somehow incidental to language rather than an essential part of it, we may notice that connotative meaning is not specific to language, but is shared by other communicative systems, such as visual art and music. Whatever connotations the word *baby* has can be conjured up (more effectively, because the medium is directly representational) by a drawing of a baby, or an imitation of a baby’s cry. The overlap between linguistic and visual connotations is particularly noticeable in advertising, where words are often the lesser patterns of illustrations in the task of conferring on a product a halo of favourable associations.

A second fact which indicates that connotative meaning is peripheral compared with conceptual meaning is that connotations are relatively unstable: that is, they vary considerably, as we have seen, according to culture, historical period, and the experience of the individual. Although it is too simple to suggest that all speakers of a particular language speak exactly the same language, it can be assumed, as a principle without which communication through that language would not be possible, that on the whole they share the same conceptual framework, just as they share approximately the same syntax. In fact, many semanticists

today assume that the same basic conceptual framework is common to all languages, and is a universal property of a human mind.

Thirdly, connotative meaning is indeterminate and open-ended in a sense in which conceptual meaning is not. Connotative meaning is open-ended in the same way as our knowledge and beliefs about the universe are open-ended: any characteristic of the referent, identified subjectively or objectively, may contribute to the connotative meaning of the expression which denotes it. In contrast, it is taken as fundamental by anyone who studies conceptual meaning that the meaning of a word or sentence can be codified in terms of a limited set of symbols (e. g. in the form of a finite set of discrete features of meaning), and that the semantic representation of a sentence can be specified by means of a finite number of rules. This postulate of the finiteness and determinateness of conceptual content is not arbitrary, but is modelled on the assumption that linguists generally make when analysing other aspects of linguistic structure. Without such assumptions, one can scarcely attempt to describe language as a coherent system at all.

Stylistic and Affective Meaning

We turn now to two aspects of communication which have to do with the situation in which an utterance takes place. Stylistic meaning is that which a piece of language conveys about the social circumstances of its use. We “decode” the stylistic meaning of a text through our recognition of different dimensions and levels of usage within the same language. We recognize some words or pronunciations as being dialectal, i. e. as telling us something of the geographical or social origin of the speaker; other features of language tell us something of the social relationship between the speaker and hearer: we have a scale of status usage, for example, descending from formal and literary English at one end to colloquial, familiar, and eventually slang English at the other.

A recent account of English style (Crystal and Davy, *Investigating English Style*) has recognized the following main dimensions of stylistic variation (I have added the examples of the categories of usage one might distinguish on each dimension):

A. (Relatively permanent features of style)

INDIVIDUALITY (The language of Mr X, of Mrs Y, of Miss Z, etc.).

DIALECT (The language of a geographical region or of a social class).

TIME (The language of the eighteenth century, etc.).

B.

DISCOURSE:

- a) MEDIUM (Speech, writing, etc.).
- b) PARTICIPATION (Monologue, dialogue, etc.).

C. (Relatively temporary features of style)

PROVINCE (Language of law, of science, of advertising, etc.).

STATUS (Polite, colloquial, slang, etc., language).

MODALITY (Language of memoranda, lectures, jokes, etc.).

SINGULARITY (The style of Dickens, of Hemingway, etc.).

Although not exhaustive, this list indicates something of the range of style differentiation possible within a single language. It is not surprising, perhaps, that we rarely find words which have both the same conceptual meaning and the same stylistic meaning. This observation has frequently led people to declare that “true synonyms do not exist”. If we understand synonymy as complete equivalence of communicative effect, it is indeed hard to find an example that will disprove this statement. But there is much convenience in restricting the term synonymy to equivalence of conceptual meaning, so that we may then contrast conceptual synonyms with respect to their varying stylistic overtones:

steed (poetic)

horse (general)

nag (slang)

gee-gee (baby language)

cast (literary, biblical)

throw (general)

chuck (casual, slang)

domicile (very formal, official)

residence (formal)

abode (poetic)

hone (general)

diminutive (very formal)

tiny (colloquial)

wee (colloquial, dialectal)

The style dimension of status is particularly important in distinguishing synonymous expressions. Here is an example in which the difference of status is maintained through a whole sentence, and is reflected in syntax as well as in vocabulary:

(1) *They chucked a stone at the cops, and then did a bunk with the loot.*

(2) *After casting a stone at the police, they absconded with the money.*

Sentence (1) could be said by two criminals, talking casually about the crime afterwards; sentence (2) might be said by the chief inspector in making his official report. Both could be describing the same happening, and their common ground of conceptual meaning is evident in the

difficulty anyone would have to assenting to the truth of one of these sentences, and denying the truth of the other.

If we extend the idea of linguistic situation a bit more we see that language can also reflect the personal feelings of the speaker, including his attitude to the listener, or his attitude to something he is talking about. Affective meaning, as this sort of meaning can be called, is often explicite conveyed through the conceptual or connotative content of the words used. Someone who is addressed: *You're a vicious tyrant and a villainous reprobate, and I hate you for it!* is left in little doubt as to the feelings of the speaker towards him. But there are less direct ways of disclosing our attitude than this: for example, by scaling our remarks according to politeness. With the object of getting people to be quiet, we might say either:

(3) *I'm terribly sorry to interrupt, but I wonder if you would be so kind as to lower your voices a little.*

or:

(4) *Will you belt up?*

Factors such as intonation and voice-timbre — what we often refer to as “tone of voice” — are also important here. The impression of politeness in (3) can be reversed by a tone of biting sarcasm; sentence (4) can be turned into a playful remark between intimates if delivered with the intonation of a mild request.

Affective meaning is largely a parasitic category in the sense that to express our emotions we rely upon the mediation of other categories of meaning — conceptual, connotative, or stylistic. Emotional expression through style comes about, for instance, when we adopt an impolite tone to express displeasure (as in (4) above), or we adopt a casual tone to express friendliness. On the other hand, there are elements of language (chiefly interjections, like *Aha!* and *Yippee!*) whose chief function is to express emotion. When we use these, we communicate feelings and attitudes without the mediation of any other kind of semantic function.

Reflected and Collocative Meaning

Two further, though less important types of meaning involve an interconnection on the lexical level of language.

First, reflected meaning is the meaning which arises in cases of multiple conceptual meaning, when one sense of a word forms part of our response to another sense. On hearing, in a church service, the synonymous expressions *The Comforter* and *The Holy Ghost*, both referring to The Third Person of the Trinity, I find my reactions to these terms conditioned by the everyday non-religious meanings of *comfort* and *ghost*. *The Comforter* sounds warm and comforting (although in the religious context, it means “the strengthener or supporter”), while *The Holy Ghost* sounds awesome.

One sense of a word seems to “rub off” on another sense in this way only when it has a dominant suggestive power either through relative frequency and familiarity (as in the case of the *Holy Ghost*) or through the strength of its associations. Only in poetry, which invites a heightened sensitivity to language in all respects, do we find reflected meaning operating in less obviously favourable circumstances:

*Are limbs, so dear-achieved, are sides
Full-nerved — still warm — too hard to stir?*

In these lines from *Futility*, a poem on a dead soldier, Wilfred Owen overtly uses the word *dear* in the sense “expensive(ly)”, but also alludes, one feels in the context of the poem, to the sense “beloved”.

The case where reflected meaning intrudes through the sheer strength of emotive suggestion is most strikingly illustrated by words which have a taboo meaning. Since their popularization in senses connected with the physiology of sex, it has become increasingly difficult to use terms like *intercourse*, *ejaculation* and *erection* in innocent senses without conjuring up their sexual associations. This process of taboo contamination has accounted in the past for the dying-out of the non-taboo sense of a word: Bloomfield explained the replacement of *cock* in its farmyard sense by *rooster* as due to the influence of the taboo use of the former word, and one wonders if *intercourse* is now following a similar path.

Collocative meaning consists of the associations a word acquires on account of the meanings of words which tend to occur in its environment. *Pretty* and *handsome* share common ground in the meaning “good-looking”, but may be distinguished by the range of nouns with which they are likely to occur or (to use the linguist’s term) collocate:

pretty	girl	handsome	boy
	boy		man
	woman		car
	flower		vessel
	garden		overcoat
	colour		airliner
	village, etc.		typewriter, etc.

The ranges may well, overlap: *handsome woman* and *pretty woman* are both acceptable, although they suggest a different kind of attractiveness because of the collocative associations of the two adjectives. Further examples are quasi-synonymous verbs such as *wander* and *stroll* (cows may *wander*, but may not *stroll*) or *tremble* and *quiver* (one *trembles* with *fear*, but *quivers* with *excitement*). Not all differences in potential co-occurrence need to be explained as collocative meaning: some may be due to stylistic differences, others to conceptual differences. It is the incongruity of combining unlike styles that makes *He mounted his gee-gee* or *He got on his steed* an improbable combination. On the other hand, the acceptability of *The donkey ate hay*, is opposed to *The donkey ate silence*, is a matter of compatibility on the level of conceptual semantics. Only when explanation in terms of other categories of meaning does not apply do we need to invoke the special category of collocative meaning: on the other levels, generalizations can be made, while collocative meaning is simply an idiosyncratic property of individual words.

Associative Meaning: a Summary Term

Reflected meaning and collocative meaning, affective meaning and stylistic meaning: all these have more in common with connotative meaning than with conceptual meaning; they all have the same open-ended, indeterminate character, and lend themselves to analysis in terms of scales or ranges, rather than in discrete either — this-or-that terms. They can all be brought together under the heading of associative meaning, and to explain communication on these levels, we need employ nothing more sophisticated than an elementary associationist theory of mental connections based upon contiguities of experience. We contrast them all with conceptual meaning, because conceptual meaning seems to require the postulation of intricate mental structures which are specific to language and to the human species.

Associative meaning contains so many imponderable factors that it can be studied systematically only by approximative statistical techniques. In effect, Osgood, Suci and Tannenbaum proposed a method for a partial analysis of associative meaning when they published their ambitiously titled book *The Measurement of Meaning* in 1957. Osgood and his co-authors devised a technique (involving a statistical measurement device, *the semantic differential*) for plotting meaning in terms of a multi-dimensional semantic space, using as data speakers' judgements recorded in terms of seven-point scales. The scales are labelled by contrasting adjective pairs, such as *happy — sad*, *hard — soft*, *slow — fast*, so that a person may, for example, record his impression of the word *bagpipe* on a form in the following way:

	3	2	1	0	1	2	3	
good	:		X	:	:	:		bad
hard	:	X	:	:	:	:		soft
passive	:		:	:	:	:	X	active

Statistically, the investigators found that particular significance seemed to lie in three major dimensions, those of evaluation (*good — bad*), potency (*hard — soft*), and activity (*active — passive*). It is clear, even from this very brief sketch, that the method can provide no more than a *partial* and *approximate* account of associative meaning: *partial* because it entails a selection from indefinitely many possible scales, which in any case would only provide for associative meaning in so far as it is explicable in scalar terms; *approximate* because of the statistical sampling, and because a seven-point scale constitutes a cutting-up of a continuous scale into seven segments within which no differentiation is made — a process similar in its crudity to that of cutting up the spectrum into seven primary colours. This is not to disparage the semantic differential technique as a means of quantifying associative meaning: the lesson to be learned is, in fact, that is only by such relatively insensitive tools as this that associative meaning can be systematically studied: it does not lend itself to determinate analyses involving yes-no choices and structures of uniquely segmentable elements.

Another important observation about the semantic differential is that it has been found useful in psychological fields such as personality studies, attitude measurement, and psychotherapy, where differences in the reactions of individuals are under scrutiny, rather than the common core of reactions that they share. This upholds what I said earlier in particular reference to connotative meaning: that whereas conceptual meaning is substantially part of the common system of language shared by members of a speech community, associative meaning is less stable, and varies with the individual experience.

Thematic meaning

The final category of meaning I shall attempt to distinguish is thematic meaning, or what is communicated by the way in which a speaker or writer organizes the message, in terms of ordering, focus, and emphasis. It is often felt, for example, that an active sentence such as (1) has a different meaning from its passive equivalent (2), although in conceptual content they seem to be the same:

- (1) *Mrs Bessie Smith donated the first prize.*
- (2) *The first prize was donated by Mrs Bessie Smith.*

Certainly these have different communicative values in that they suggest contexts: the active sentence answers an implicit question *What did Mrs Bessie Smith donate?*, while the passive sentence answers an implicit question *Who was the first prize donated by?* or (more simply) *Who donated the first prize?* That is, (1), in contrast to (2), suggests that we know who Mrs Bessie Smith is (perhaps through a previous mention). The same truth conditions, however, apply to each: it would be impossible to find a situation of which (1) was an accurate report while (2) was not, or vice versa.

Thematic meaning is mainly a matter of choice between alternative grammatical constructions, as in:

- (3) *A man is waiting in the hall.*
- (4) *There's a man waiting in the hall.*
- (5) *They stepped at the end of the corridor.*
- (6) *At the end of the corridor, they stopped.*
- (7) *I like Danish cheese best.*
- (8) *Danish cheese I like best.*
- (9) *It's Danish cheese that I like best.*

But the kind of contrast of ordering and emphasis illustrated by (1) and (2) can also be contrived by lexical means: by substituting (for example) *belongs to* for *owns*:

(10) *My brother owns the largest betting-shop in London.*

(11) *The largest betting-shop in London belongs to my brother.*

In other cases, it is stress and intonation rather than grammatical construction that highlights information in the one part of a sentence. If the word *electric* is given contrastive stress in (12):

(12) *Bill uses an electric razor.*

(13) *The kind of razor that Bill uses is an electric one.*

the effect is to focus attention on that word as containing new information, against a background of what is already assumed to be known (viz. that Bill uses a razor). This kind of emphasis could have been equally achieved in English by the different syntactic construction of (13). The sentences bracketed together above obviously have, in a sense, the same meaning; but all the same, we need to acknowledge that their communicative effect may be somewhat different; they will not each be equally appropriate within the same context.

Intended and Interpreted Meaning

I have now dealt with the seven types of meaning promised at the beginning of the chapter, but I do not wish to give the impression that this is a complete catalogue, accounting for all that a piece of language may communicate. These are, to my mind, the most important categories; but one might, for example, have added category for the physiological information about the sex of the speaker, his age, the state of his sinuses, and so on.

It may be wondered why I have avoided making a distinction between the intended meaning, that which is in the mind of the speaker when he is framing his message, and the interpreted meaning, or that which is conveyed to the mind of the listener when he receives the message. I have equated meaning in its broad sense with communicative effect, and communication usually means transfer of information from a source (A) to a target (B). Further, one might argue, communication can only be judged to have taken place if we know that what was in

mind (A) has been transferred to, or copied in, mind (B). All this is true, and yet a linguist may feel entitled to ignore the difference between the intention of the message and its effect, because he is interested in studying the communication system itself, rather than what use or misuse is made of it. He is interested in studying the semantic aspect of the language which we may assume to be common to the minds of (A) and (B), and this includes, incidentally, studying ambiguities and other aspects of language (e. g. variability of associative meaning) which give scope for miscommunication. But the important point is that meaning, for linguistics, is neutral between speaker's meaning and hearer's meaning; and this is surely justifiable, since only through knowing the neutral potentialities of the medium of communication itself can we investigate differences between what a person intends to convey and what he actually conveys.

Demarcation Problems

A further caveat about the seven types of meaning: there are always problems of demarcation, and more especially, problems of separating conceptual meaning from the more peripheral categories. The difficulty of delimiting conceptual from connotative meaning, noted earlier, is paralleled in other borderline areas, such as that between conceptual meaning and stylistic meaning:

- (1) He *stuck* the key in his pocket.
- (2) He *put* the key in his pocket.

We could argue that (1) and (2) are conceptually synonymous, and that the difference between the two is a matter of style (sentence (2) is neutral, while (1) is colloquial and casual). On the other hand, we could maintain that the shift in style is combined with a conceptual difference: that *stick* in a context such as (1) has a more precise denotation than (2) and could be roughly defined as "to put carelessly and quickly". There is support for the second explanation in the slight oddity of the following sentences:

- ?* *He stuck the key slowly in his pocket.*
- ?** *He stuck the key carefully in his pocket.*

* Здесь и далее знаком «*» отмечены примеры, искусственно созданные и не существующие в естественном языке.

Often, in fact, the solution to a problem of delimitation is to conclude that quasi-synonyms differ on at least two planes of meaning.

As a second illustration, we may take a case on the border between conceptual and collocative meaning that of the verbs *smile* and *grin*. Do these words have different conceptual meanings, or is it just that the range of expressions with which they habitually combine is different? Few would hesitate over which of the two words to insert in:

The duchess ... -ed graciously as she shook hands with her guests.
Gargoyles ... -ed hideously from the walls of the building.

But the question is whether such differences in collocation spring from different conceptual and connotative content: whether, for example, a *grin* can be defined as a broader, toothier and more potentially hostile expression than a *smile*, and is more likely to be found on the face of a gargoyle than that of a duchess for that very reason. This is a particularly complex case in that differences of stylistic and affective meaning are also clearly implicated. In fact, as already observed, affective meaning is a category which overlaps heavily with style, connotation, and conceptual content.

Summary

As this chapter has introduced quite a range of terms for types of meaning, it is fitting that it should end with summary, and a suggestion or two for simplifying terminology:

I have here used *sense* as a briefer term for “conceptual meaning”, (or “meaning” in the narrower sense), and will feel free to use it for clarity and convenience from now on. For “meaning” in the wider sense which embraces all seven types listed, it is useful to have the alternative term *communicative value*.

Aids to the study of the text

1. What is understood by the term “conceptual meaning”?
2. What are the two structural principles that lie at the basis of all linguistic patterning?
3. What is connotative meaning?
4. What is the boundary between conceptual and connotative meaning?
5. Why is connotative meaning peripheral if compared with conceptual meaning?
6. What is the essence of stylistic and affective meanings?

7. How is it possible to define reflected meaning?
8. Why is the category of collocative meaning rarely invoked?
9. What is meant by the term “thematic meaning”?
10. What is the essence of intended and interpreted meanings?
11. What are the demarcation problems?

Don L. F. Nilsen, Aleen Pace Nilsen

SEMANTIC THEORY: A LINGUISTIC PERSPECTIVE

Various Semantic Models

Before going on with recent developments in semantics, we'll review the terms which have been and are now in use in the field, not so much because they are important in themselves, but because the concepts behind the terms are important, and the existence of the terms shows the kind and the amount of work that has been done.

When a person is trying to communicate, the intended meaning exists in that person's mind. It comes to the surface either through speech or through writing. In either case there are complications which might interfere with the intended communication. These can occur with either a single word or with an entire sentence. The problems in speech are not necessarily the same problems as will occur in writing. For example in writing there might be confusion caused by homographs which are words written with the same characters but having different meanings and different origins. Since homographs are pronounced the same, it is appropriate to also call them homophones. The nouns *bank* as in *I'm putting my money in the bank*, and *She was sitting on the river bank*, are both homographs and homophones because they are written and pronounced the same. However, the three words *their*, *there*, and *they're* are not homographs because their spelling is different. But they are homophones (at least in some dialects) because they sound the same. A cover term, which is the word most commonly used for this concept, is homonym. Homonyms are words which have different meanings but which sound the same regardless of their spelling. Words which are spelled the same but which have different pronunciations and different meanings

are called heteronyms, for example, the verb *lead* as in *I will lead you there*, and the noun *lead* as in *I broke the lead in my pencil*. <...>

Words which have similar meanings but different spellings and sounds are called synonyms, for example *trousers* and *pants*. Sentences having similar meanings but different words are called paraphrases, for example, *John came by plane*, and *My best friend arrived on a 707 jet*.

But what about a pair of words like *borrow* and *lend*? The sentences, *John lent me \$5.00*, and *I borrowed \$5.00 from John*, refer to the same real-world situation. Therefore in a sense the words *borrow* and *lend* must have the same meaning and might therefore be considered synonyms. More specifically, such pairs as *borrow* — *lend*, *buy* — *sell*, *give* — *take*, etc, are called converses, meaning that they occur with the same words (e. g., *John*, *me*, and *\$5.00*), and have basically the same meanings, but they impose a surface structure constraint that the words must be in a different linear order. They cause different words to end up as subjects, objects, and prepositional phrases. This means that different words are emphasized, but the meanings are the same. So in a way it is possible to consider such terms as *lend* and *borrow* both as synonyms and as antonyms without being contradictory.

Words which are alike or very similar in all three areas of meaning, pronunciation, and spelling but which occur in different languages are called cognates, for example Italian *studiare* and English *study*. At the opposite extreme from these very similar words are words which are different in meaning, pronunciation, and spelling. These words are called antonyms as exemplified by the pair *freeze* — *melt*. But it is not enough to say simply that the meanings of two antonyms are different, since there are some semantic constraints on the amount and type of difference. First, antonyms must be of the same syntactic and semantic class. And second, within this class they must be polar opposites. <...>

There are several approaches to the study of semantics. Some of these are full-fledged rigorous models presenting machinery for the treatment of semantic matters, while others are merely statements about semantics and ways of dealing with it. In the United States early semantic models included general semantics, Whorfian semantics, and semantic differentiation. More recent developments are logical and mathematical semantics, interpretive semantics, generative semantics, case grammar, and Chafe grammar.

General Semantics

When the lay person hears the term “semantics”, he probably thinks of general semantics which is concerned with very practical matters such as the improvement of communication through better word usage. General semanticists work basically with performance rather than competence. The kind of work done in this model can be seen from the titles of some of the important books written by general semanticists. They are listed chronologically. *The Meaning of Meaning* by C. K. Ogden and L. A. Richards (1923); *Language in Thought and Action* by S. I. Hayakawa (1939, third edition, 1972); *Philosophy in a New Key* by Susanne K. Langer (1948); *Words and What They Do to You* by Catherine Minter (1952); *Science and Sanity* by Alfred Korzybski (1958); and *Semantics and Common Sense* by Louis B. Salomon (1966).

It can be seen from the types of issues which the general semanticists deal with that they have had an influence on later models. However it should be pointed out that general semantics is an informal model and is considered by modern linguists to be outside the scientific investigation of language.

Whorfian Semantics

In the early 1900's an anthropologist by the name of Benjamin Lee Whorf developed the idea that the way humans perceive the world around them is influenced by the language they happen to speak. Taken literally, this means that if we speak a language that is different from someone else's then we will see the world differently than that person does. People use Whorf's idea as an explanation of one of the causes of international misunderstanding and strife. And just recently feminists have been referring to the Whorfian hypothesis as supporting their desire to change parts of the English language which they feel make the male seem more important than the female.

Chapter ten of Edward Sapir's *Language* which was published in 1921 gives a good statement of Whorf's ideas. And in 1956, John B. Carroll edited *Language Thought and Reality: Selected Writings of Benjamin Lee Whorf*.

Semantic Differentiation

A significant semantic model which has developed within the field of psychology is termed semantic differentiation. Informants are asked

to rate words along a number of subjective scales designed to help the researcher determine the connotations of a particular word. For example, on a seven-place scale, a person would have to indicate whether “father” would be considered happy or sad, hard or soft, fast or slow, etc. Seventy-six such scales were originally proposed, but this number is by no means set. These seventy-six scales can be grouped into categories according to whether the scale is a test of some sort of evaluation (good — bad, optimistic — pessimistic, kind — cruel, etc.), potency (hard — soft, strong — weak, severe — lenient, etc.), stability (stable — changeable, cautious — rash, orthodox — heretical, etc.), tautness (angular — rounded, straight — curved, sharp — blunt, etc.), novelty (new — old, usual — unusual, youthful — mature, etc.), receptivity (interesting — boring, sensitive — insensitive, savory — tasteless, etc.), aggressiveness (aggressive — defensive, etc.), and miscellaneous (ornate — plain, near — far, tangible — intangible, etc.). The informant is forced to make a ranking for each item. Thus, he is forced to rate a word like *father* somewhere on the seven-point scale ranging, for example, from angular to rounded, and there is always the problem that different informants are using different intuitive criteria in making such judgments. Even those scales which are extremely relevant to the terms being analyzed are subjective. The subjectivity which is being measured is very elusive. This is the chief value as well as the chief limitation of this particular method. A good statement on this model is *The Measurement of Meaning* by Charles E. Osgood, George J. Suci, and Percy H. Tannenbaum (1957).

Logical and Mathematical Semantics

For quite some time specialists in symbolic logic and set theory have been working with various issues which are highly significant to the work of semantically oriented linguists. Recent work in semantic theory has borrowed heavily from these two fields.

Logicians have been very much interested in denotation; in contrasting, for instance, a vague concept like “gryphon” which has no concrete referent in the real world with a concept like “horse” which has a definite referent. They make the distinction between intensional meaning, which is the semantic qualities of a word, and extensional meaning, which is the way a word extends or relates to the real world. They are also interested in whether an expression represents an accidental or purposeful

action. And one of their most important interests concerns the analyticity of a statement. If the truth of a statement can be determined wholly by knowledge of the meanings of its parts, then it is said to be analytic. A sentence which does not have this quality is said to be synthetic. A synthetic sentence cannot be shown to be either logically true (tautological), or logically false (contradictory) by its internal structure. A contradiction is a statement in which two or more parts of the internal structure are incompatible with each other. For example, the sentence, *Kings, presidents, magistrates, and dictators are rulers*, is tautological because if you know the meanings of the words *kings*, *presidents*, *magistrates*, *dictators*, and *rulers*, you can correctly judge the sentence to be true. By the same process if you know the meanings of the words *peasants* and *rulers*, you can correctly judge the sentence, *Peasants are rulers*, to be contradictory. Both of these decisions were arrived at through studying the internal structure of the sentences. But with the synthetic sentence, *Elmer is a ruler*, there is nothing in the sentence itself which will enable us to judge its truthfulness or falseness. Instead we have to know something about the real world and about Elmer.

Logicians have also been very interested in sentence analysis. Consider, for example, the sentence *John hit Mary*. In this sentence *hit* is described as a two-place predicate because it requires two nouns; a subject and an object. In terms of logical predicates, this sentence could be analyzed as follows: hitxy, humanx, malex, namexz, Johnz, humany, femaley, namew, Maryw. And this would be read as follows: “x hit y, and x is human, and x is male, and x has the name z, and z is John, and y is human, and y is female, and y has the name w, and w is Mary”. This type of analysis is similar to recent proposals by some linguists in which such logical predicates as HUMAN, and MALE, are thought of as semantic features. It is also similar to some recent analyses in that it considers the predicate as the central word in the sentence.

Logicians are also working on identifying words as members of particular sets or categories, and they are trying to measure the effects of quantifiers such as *all*, *no*, and *there exists*; conjunctions such as *and* and *or*; casual relationship words such as *if...then*, and *if* and *only if*, and mathematical terms such as *equals*, *is greater than*, and *is greater than or equal to*. Such concepts as reflexivity, transitivity, and reciprocity are also being worked on. For example, two words are said to be reflexive if one refers back to the other, as in *I cut myself*. A transitive expression in

the mathematical sense is one which extends a quality, for example such expressions as *tall*, *old*, *fat*, etc. in that if A is taller than B, and B is taller than C, then A is automatically taller than C. In contrast, the expression *friend* is not transitive. A could be a friend of B, and B a friend of C without A being a friend of C. Two expressions are reciprocal if their positions can be reversed in reference to the predicate. For example, if A is a neighbor of B, B is a neighbor of A. In the sentence, *John married Mary*, *marry* is a reciprocal predicate, but in the sentence, *The priest married them*, *marry* is not reciprocal.

People working in logical and mathematical semantics have devised an elaborate shorthand for dealing with the various concepts they are interested in. Some good books in which these concepts have been developed are *Machine Translation of Languages* edited by William N. Locke and A. Donald Booth (1955), *Handbook of Mathematical Psychology* edited by R. Duncan Luce, Robert R. Bush, and Eugene Galanter (1963), and *Mathematical Linguistics in Eastern Europe* by Ferenc Kiefer (1968).

Books on logical semantics include *Word and Object* by Willard Van Orman Quine (1960), *Signification and Significance* by Charles Morris (1964), *The Language of Logic* by Morton Schagin (1968), and *Towards a Semantic Description of English* by Geoffrey N. Leech (1970).

Interpretive Semantics

When Noam Chomsky presented his revolutionary grammar in his 1957 *Syntactic Structures*, he did not pay particular attention to meaning or semantics. It wasn't until 1963, that someone proposed a way to work with semantics as part of generative grammar. Jerrold J. Katz and Jerry Fodor, both philosophers at MIT, published an article in *Language* entitled *The Structure of Semantic Theory*. The semantic model outlined in this article was further developed in a book entitled *An Integrated Theory of Linguistic Descriptions* (1964) by Katz and Paul Postal, a linguist. The article in *Language* and the book by Katz and Postal were responsible for many of the revisions of the generative-transformational model which were proposed by Chomsky in his *Aspects of the Theory of Syntax* (1965).

Interpretive semantics, now also called the standard theory, relies on projection rules to give an interpretation to a sentence. According to this model, each lexical item has associated with a certain number of features.

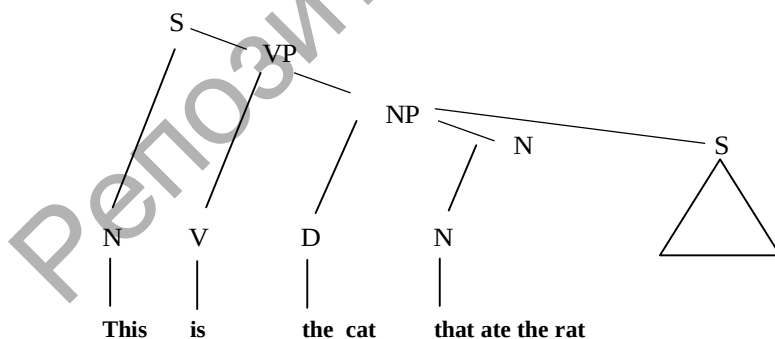
One of these features is the part of speech which is partially determined by the strict subcategorization constraints on a particular item. For example, any particular verb characteristically requires certain grammatical categories to precede it and follow it. Thus, an intransitive verb such as *walk* does not require anything to go with it except a subject, while a transitive verb such as *hit* requires both a subject and a direct object. A verb like *dart* must be followed by an adverb of motion. These are statements about the strict subcategorization of these three verbs. In sentences like *John hit*, or *John saw of* the strict subcategorization requirements of the verb are violated, in the first sentence by not having anything after the transitive verb, and in the second sentence by having a preposition after the transitive verb rather than the appropriate noun phrase.

Subcategorization rules are basically concerned with syntactic matters rather than semantic matters. But there are also certain semantic features associated with each lexical item. The semantic markers are those semantic features which have general importance in the grammar. A particular semantic marker will be a feature of not just a single word, but of many words. Semantic distinguishers have relevance for only a particular word. A distinguisher is the semantic feature which separates one lexical item from all others. For example, in the most common meaning of the word *bachelor*, the feature NOUN is the part of speech: the features HUMAN, MALE, and ADULT, are the semantic markers, and NEVER-MARRIED is the distinguisher.

It is the function of the projection rules to scan the features, i. e., the part of speech, the semantic markers, and the distinguishers of each lexical item, and to combine these features with those of other lexical items with which the individual words form a constituent, and to determine which of the features are compatible with each other at a particular level. Thus, the projection rules would show that the word *ball* is ambiguous, meaning either a spherical object for use in a game, or a formal dance. But the projection rules would show that the expression *soccer ball* is unambiguous since the features of *soccer* are normally compatible only with the spherical-object meaning of *ball*, rather than the formal dance meaning. Projection rules can therefore be seen as rules of disambiguation. After the projection rules have scanned the entire sentence, including embedded sentences, if any, in much the same way as they scanned the features of the expression *soccer ball*, they would be able to specify if a sentence is deviant or has no composite meaning, i. e., is anomalous,

or if it has one composite meaning, i. e., is unique, or if it has more than one composite meaning, i. e., is ambiguous. By making a distinction between the syntactic features and the semantic features, it is also possible to tell if an anomalous or ambiguous sentence is deviant because of syntax or semantics. For example, the sentence, *He was seated by the President*, is semantically ambiguous because the confusion is due to the double meaning of *by*. The sentence, *I won't speak at any more dull women's meetings*, is syntactically ambiguous because the confusion is due to the placement of the two modifiers *dull* and *women* in front of *meetings*. The syntax does not show which word *dull* is modifying.

The important differences between Chomsky 1957 and Chomsky 1965 result from the attempt to incorporate the semantic theory of Katz, Fodor, and Postal into the transformational model. One important difference is that the 1965 model makes frequent reference to the cover term, *complex symbol* or CS, which refers to all of the features of a particular lexical item. Chomsky did not actually write semantic rules into his revised grammar, but by using CS as his last notation on tree diagrams, he made it possible for semantic information to be plugged into his syntactic analysis. Another difference is that in the later model the tree diagram shows sentences to be embedded into other sentences in the following manner:



Before the 1965 *Aspects*, generative transformationalists made a distinction between kernel sentences, which are the most basic simple sentences, and derived sentences, which have been changed into such things

as questions, imperatives, passives, and negatives. They also generated each sentence separately and then combined the sentences together by means of a generalized transformation such as the following:

This is the cat	
The cat ate the rat	} This is the cat that ate the rat

There were problems in applying projection rules in this earlier model because each sentence had to be scanned separately. This meant that the projection rules could not be used to determine the meaning of the super sentence that resulted when the two sentences were merged together in some way.

Further reading on these matters might be found in Roderick A. Jacobs and Peter S. Rosenbaum's *English Transformational Grammar* (1968), Jerrold J. Katz's *Semantic Theory* (1972), and Ray S. Jackendoff's *Semantic Interpretation in Generative Grammar* (1972).

Generative Semantics

In recent works by such linguists as George Lakoff, James McCawley, Jeffrey Gruber, and Leonhard Lipka, a number of problems in the interpretive semantics model have been noted. These writers reject the idea that syntax should be the grammatical base. First, they say that syntax occupies an intermediate position between phonology and semantics. When using syntax as the base, it is therefore necessary to go in two different directions, up to the phonology and down to the semantics. Secondly, semantic features are universal whereas syntax and phonology are mainly language specific. They claim that it makes more sense to go from this universal base toward the more specific and divergent syntactic and phonological components of various particular languages. Third, they feel that there may not be any justification for a separate syntactic level at all, and if there is no independently justified level of syntax, then this level cannot be the base level since it doesn't really exist. And fourth, as Wallace Chafe has pointed out, the speech act — and probably the origin of language as well — begins with concepts and these are encoded into language rather than the reverse being true. A final criticism of the interpretive semantic model is that it has two separate kinds of rules — transformations for handling syntactic and phonological matters, and projection rules for handling semantic matters.

The generative semanticists feel that only one type of rule is necessary and this is the transformation. They feel that they can handle semantic information by postulating higher predicates and predicate-lifting transformations which have the effect of combining a lower predicate with a higher predicate which results in a new word with all of the meanings of the two words from which it was formed. For example, they see the verb *kill* as consisting of the state *dead* plus the two higher level predicates *came* and *become*. Thus, taking the expression, *cause to become dead* one predicate-lifting transformation will change *become dead* into *die*, and a second will change *cause to die* into *kill*. It has been argued by non-generative semanticists that *cause to die* does not mean exactly the same as *kill*. The generative semanticists have answered that the higher predicate *cause* is different from the lexical item *cause*, and in fact differs in exactly those ways which make *cause to die* an accurate paraphrase of *kill*. In a way it appears that on this particular point the generative semanticists have come full cycle in their reasoning. They claim to be able to handle semantics without resorting to semantic features. Yet what they call their higher predicates look very much like semantic features since they make a distinction between them and regular lexical units or words.

Some of the best readings on the generative semantics viewpoint are James D. McCawley's *Where Do Noun Phrases Come From?* in *Readings in English Transformational Grammar* (1970), Jeffrey Gruber's *Studies in Lexical Relations* (1970), Paul Postal's *On the Surface Verb Remind* in *Linguistic Inquiry* (1970), George Lakoff's *On Generative Semantics* in *Semantics: An Interdisciplinary Reader in Philosophy, Linguistics, and Psychology* (1971), and Leonard Lipka's *Semantic Structure and Word Formation* (1972).

Case Grammar

Shortly after *Aspects* was published in 1965, Charles Fillmore began working on a new kind of semantically oriented grammar. For more than a year mimeographed copies of his article outlining this model were circulated among linguists. Finally in 1968, the article entitled *The Case for Case*, was published in *Universals in Linguistic Theory* edited by Emmon Bach and Robert Harms. In this article, Fillmore proposed that all languages have deep cases like Agent, Instrument, Experiencer, Object, etc. (These will be capitalized to distinguish them from the standard

parts of speech, some of which have the same name.) He defined the Agent as the animate actor, the Instrument as the inanimate cause, the Experiencer (this term was suggested in his later work) as the animate receiver, the Object as the thing manipulated, etc. And although he took note of a correlation between subjects and Agents, between direct objects and Objects, between indirect objects and Experiencers, etc., he pointed out that this correlation is by no means perfect since subject, direct object, and indirect object are surface structure designations, while Agent, Object, and Experiencer are deep structure designations. Thus, to use his example, the Agent is a subject in *John broke the window with a hammer*, the Instrument is a subject in *A hammer broke the window* and the Object is a subject in *The window broke*. In showing that there is a partial correlation between the surface structure functions and deep structure cases, Fillmore noted that whenever there is an Agent in an active English sentence it is automatically the subject of the sentence: the Instrument is next in line of eligibility as a subject, and the Object is eligible to become the subject only if there is no Agent or Instrument in the sentence.

Fillmore generalized that each deep case has a particular preposition associated with it. For example, the preposition for the Agent case is *by* as in *Paris was captured by the German army*. The preposition for the Experiencer case is *to* as in *John told a story to Mary*. The preposition for the Instrumental case is *with* as in *John hit the window with a hammer*. And the preposition for the Object case is also *with* as in *John loaded the truck with hay*. He feels that the preposition is always present in the deep structure, but is lost whenever the noun phrase becomes a subject, a direct object, or an indirect object in a surface structure, as in *By the German army captured Paris*, *John told to Mary a story*, *With a hammer hit the window*, and *John loaded with hay onto the truck*, respectively. In the deep case, Fillmore considers all noun phrases to be prepositional phrases. He pointed out that the noun phrases can be moved around in the sentence or be deleted as long as the preposition remains with it, but as soon as the preposition is lost, as it is when the noun phrase becomes a subject or direct object, the noun phrase can no longer be moved or deleted.

To this point, we have been discussing Fillmore's treatment of noun phrases. He handles verbs not in terms of deep cases, but rather in terms of deep case frames. That is, he would classify verbs according to which deep cases they co-occur with. In the sentence *John jumped from one*

side of the ditch to the other side, the verb *jump* has associated with it an Agent (*John*), a Source (*one side of the ditch*), and a Goal (*the other side of the ditch*). The fact that the sentence, *John jumped*, is grammatical in English while the sentence, *Jumped*, is not grammatical, shows that for the verb *jump* an Agent is necessary, whereas a Source and a Goal are possible, but not necessary. Fillmore would therefore say that the verb *jump* has the case frame [+– A(S) G]. In reading this kind of notation of case frames, the brackets indicate that the enclosed cases are members of the set of cases that occur with a particular verb. The plus sign means that the cases mentioned are present rather than absent. The blank space stands for the position that the verb would fill if it were there. This blank space can be read as “in the context of”. Next Fillmore lists the cases which go with the verb. In actual use, at least in English, one of these cases will precede the verb because it will be acting as subject. In the sentence, *John enjoyed the movie*, both the Experiencer (*John*) and the Object (*the movie*) are necessary; this verb therefore has the case frame [+– E 0]. As another example, consider the sentence, *John hit the wall (with a hammer)*. In this sentence, the Agent (*John*), and the Object (*the wall*) are necessary to the sentence, but the Instrument (*a hammer*) is not necessary. The verb *hit* therefore has the case frame [+– A(I) 0]. A very important consequence of this type of analysis is that a classification of verbs according to their case frames corresponds very closely to a classification of verbs according to their real-world significance. Thus, the case frame [+– E 0] is appropriate not only for the verb *enjoy*, but for all verbs of psychological events. And the case frame [+ A (I) 0] is appropriate not only for *hit*, but for all verbs of contact. And even more exciting is the possibility that [+– E 0] is appropriate not only for verbs of psychological events in English, but for verbs of psychological events in *all* human languages. Because Fillmore is dealing with universal concepts, he cautions that the cases are unordered in these case frames, although it may be decided later that ordering is necessary so as to represent eligibility for such things as subject marking if this is shown to be a universal hierarchy.

Two important criticisms have been directed at the case model. The first question is whether deep cases are adequate as a universal linguistic base. The second question is related to the first; if it is shown that something more basic than deep cases, such as semantic features, is required as a universal linguistic base, then can deep cases be justified as an

intermediate structure somewhere between deep structure and surface structure? Our own feeling is that although deep cases provide some very important insights into the workings of language, they are too gross to be semantic primes. Therefore we would make only the weaker claim that they represent an intermediate structure. And even with this claim, further work may show that semantic features by themselves are perfectly adequate and possibly even simpler than deep cases in explaining the fascinating facts which Fillmore brought to light.

In addition to his statements regarding deep cases and case frames, Fillmore made a number of important observations about what the generative semanticists call predicate raising. Fillmore handled such information by entailment rules in a kind of hierarchy, whereby *require* would be said to entail *permit*; *certain* to entail *possible*; *steal* and *accuse* to entail both *criticize* and *responsible*, etc. He would say that *persuade* entails *cause* and *believe*, while the generative semanticists would postulate these expressions as lower predicates. Fillmore is also very interested in figuring out presupposition, i. e., what a speaker assumes to be true and known before he says anything. For example, in the sentence, *Harry realizes that John is President*, it is presupposed that *John is President*. Since negation does not affect presupposition, the sentence *Harry doesn't realize that John is President*, also presupposes that *John is President*. One aspect of presupposition which Fillmore is especially interested in is that resulting from various kinds of orientation. A cube in space has six sides. If this cube is sitting on the ground, it has a top, a bottom, and four sides. If in addition, one side is more ornate than the others, it has a top, a bottom, a front, a back and two sides. And finally, if there is some reason to distinguish one side from the other, it has a top, a bottom, a front, a back, a right side, and a left side. A dresser would be an example of this last situation, and it would be noteworthy that the right-hand side of a dresser is the same as the right-hand side of the person who is facing the dresser, rather than the right side of the dresser itself. Fillmore has been very concerned with such aspects of language, although it is not entirely clear how this fits into his Case Model grammar.

In this Case Model grammar Fillmore has been basically interested in justifying his deep cases by morphological and syntactic considerations. He uses several tests for deciding on the membership of a case. One such test is based on the assumption that only members of the same case can be conjoined. For example, with the acceptable *John and Mary*

broke the window, there are two Agents joined as the subject. But the sentence, *John and a hammer broke the window*, is deviant because an Agent and an Instrument have been joined. Another test Fillmore uses is that there can be only a single use of a deep case per simple predicate. For example, *John broke the window with a hammer*, is acceptable, but *The hammer broke the window with a chisel*, is unacceptable because of the two different uses of the Instrument case. Fillmore's third test for case membership has already been mentioned. It is the particular preposition used as a marker, i. e., *John* is an Agent in the sentence *The cookie was stolen by John*, because *John* can be marked with the preposition *by*. *By* is still the marker in the deep structure of *John stole the cookie*, but it has been deleted from the surface structure as happens when an Agent noun phrase becomes the subject of the sentence.

Some of the followers of Fillmore have not placed such a heavy reliance on syntactic and morphological considerations for determining deep cases. Although they have not contested Fillmore's syntactic and morphological tests, they have supplemented these tests with semantic evidence stated in terms of semantic features. <...>

Two books based on the case model are John M. Anderson's *The Grammar of Case: Toward a Localistic Theory* (1971) and D. Terence Langendoen's *Essentials of English Grammar* (1970).

Wallace Chafe in his *Meaning and the Structure of Language* (1970) states that *When introspection and surface evidence are contradictory, it is the former which is decisive*, (page 122). His model of grammar differs from Fillmore's in that it gives priority in assigning cases to semantic categories rather than to syntactic or morphological considerations. Chafe has a lengthy discussion of various kinds of semantic features: derivational, inflectional, and selectional. Chafe also postulates a direct relationship between case frames and semantic categories of verbs such as state, process, event, and action. He indicates that a state is a one-place predicate which is filled by a Patient (what Fillmore calls an Object) as in *The wood is dry*. He considers a process to be a change of state which is also a one-place predicate with a Patient filling that one place as in *The wood dried*. He considers an action also to be a one-place predicate with the one place being filled by an Agent as in *Michael ran*. An event is a combination of an action and a process. Thus Chafe would conceive of the sentence, *Michael dried the wood*, as an event consisting of an action (Michael acted) and a process (the wood

dried). Since an event consists of an action, which has an Agent, and a process, which has a Patient, it is logical that an event such as *Michael dried the wood*, would be considered a two-place predicate consisting of an Agent (*Michael*), and a Patient (*the wood*).

It can be seen from the above examples that Chafe's grammar makes use of deep cases. Unlike Fillmore, however, Chafe marks these deep cases as being hierarchical. For example in the sentence, *John made Bill a tie clasp*, Fillmore would consider the Agent (*John*), the Benefactive (*Bill*), and the Object (a *tie clasp*) all to be on the same level. But Chafe would diagram this sentence as follows so that it would show the subject-predicate dichotomy:

V	Patient (Object)	Benefactive	Agent
	N	N	N
make	tie clasp	Bill	John

Chafe's diagramming tends to superordinate those cases likely to become subjects and to subordinate the others.

Chafe is also very interested in discourse analysis, i. e., the grammar of items larger than the sentence. He points out, for example, that such a sentence as *I bought a car yesterday, but the fender was bashed in*, is not ungrammatical, even though the definite article *the* is marking a previously unidentified noun. His point is that when a speaker introduces a concept like *car* he is at the same time introducing all of the parts that one assumes are automatically a part of all (or most) cars. When someone mentions a car, it can be assumed that the hearer has conceptualized a car in his mind with many of its parts, and it is therefore possible to refer to *the* windshield, *the* tires, *the* hand brake, etc, even though the windshield, tires, and hand brake have not been previously designated independently. This observation has important ramifications in considering the nature of semantic features.

One of the most important considerations in discourse analysis is the pronoun system. Postal and others have shown that pronouns have both deep structure and surface structure constraints. Relative pronouns, personal pronouns, and reflexive pronouns must all have antecedents, but Paul Postal has pointed out that identity of sense is a necessary but not a sufficient condition to allow pronominalization. Identity of reference is also required. The sentence, *Max's parents are dead and he deeply misses them*, is grammatical because the two noun phrases *parents* and

them have both identity of sense and identity of reference. However, the sentence *Max is an orphan, and he deeply misses them*, is ungrammatical because the two noun phrases *orphan* and *them* have identity of sense in that *orphan* means a person without parents and *them* refers to this incorporated term *parents*, but they do not have identity of reference in that *orphan* and *them* do not refer to exactly the same thing. Stated differently, Postal has shown that a feature must reach the surface structure in order to be pronominalized.

Aids to the study of the text

1. What terms should be differentiated if we deal with models of semantics?
2. What are several approaches to the study of semantics?
3. What is semantic differentiation?
4. What contributions to the sphere of semantics have been done by logicians?
5. Explain the essence of the interpretive semantic model introduced by N. Chomsky.
6. Why was the interpretive semantic model criticised?
7. What rule was highlighted by the generative semanticists?
8. What is the essence of case grammar? What were the cases enumerated by C. Fillmore?
9. What is the difference between C. Fillmore's and W. Chafe's models of grammar?

William O'Grady

SEMANTICS. THE STUDY OF MEANING

Meaning. Word Meaning

The basic repository of meaning within the grammar is the lexicon, which provides the information about the meaning of individual words relevant to the interpretation of sentences. We know very little about the nature of this type of meaning or how it should be represented. Nonetheless, it is worthwhile to review briefly some of the better-known proposals and their attendant problems.

Referents

One well-known approach to semantics attempts to equate a word's meaning with the entities to which it refers — its referents. According to this theory, the meaning of the word *dog* corresponds to the set of enti-

ties (dogs) that it picks out in the real world. Although not inherently implausible, this idea encounters certain serious difficulties. For one thing, there is a problem with words such as *unicorn* and *dragon*, which have no referents in the real world even though they are far from meaningless. A problem of a different sort arises with expressions such as *the Prime Minister of Great Britain* and *the leader of the Conservative Party*, both of which refer (in 1989 at least) to Margaret Thatcher. Although these two expressions may have the same referent, we would not say that they mean the same thing. No one would maintain that the phrase *Prime Minister of Great Britain* could be defined as “the leader of the Conservative Party” or vice versa.

Extension and Intension

The impossibility of equating a word’s meaning with its referents has led to a distinction between extension and intension. Whereas a word’s extension corresponds to the set of entities that it picks out in the world, its intension corresponds to its inherent sense, the concepts that it evokes. Thus, the extension of *woman* (Table 1) would be a set of real word entities (women) while its intension would involve notions like “female” and “human”. Similarly, the phrase *Prime Minister of Great Britain* would have as its extension an individual (“Margaret Thatcher”), but its intension would involve the concept “leader of the majority party in Parliament”.

Table 1 — The extension and intension of the word *woman*

Phrase	Extension	Intension
Prime Minister of Great Britain	Margaret Thatcher	Leader of the majority party in Parliament
World Series champions (1988)	L. A. Dodgers	Winners of the baseball championship
Capital of California	Sacramento	City containing the state legislature

The distinction between a word’s intension and its extension does not allow us to resolve the question of meaning. It simply permits us to pose it in a new way: what is the nature of a word’s inherent sense or intension?

One suggestion is that word meanings (intensions) correspond to mental images. This is an obvious improvement over the referential theory since it is conceivable that one might have a mental image of a unicorn or a dragon even if there are no such entities in the real world. Unfortunately, this idea encounters serious difficulties of another sort. For one thing, it is hard to conceive of a mental image for words like *nitrogen*, 522 101, *if*, *very*, and so on. Moreover, there seems to be no mental image for the meaning of the word *dog* that could be general enough to include Chihuahuas and Irish wolfhounds, yet still exclude foxes and wolves.

Semantic Features

Still another approach to meaning tries to equate a word's intension with an abstract concept consisting of smaller components called semantic features. This componential analysis is especially effective when it comes to representing similarities and differences among words with related meanings. An obvious advantage of this approach is that it allows us to group entities into natural classes (much as we do in phonology). Hence, *man* and *boy* could be grouped together as [+HUMAN, +MALE], while *man* and *woman* could be put in a class defined by the features [+HUMAN, +ADULT].

Componential analysis gives its most impressive results when applied to sets of words referring to classes of entities with shared properties. As illustrated above, a few simple features will allow us to distinguish among subclasses of people — men, women, boys, and girls. Unlike phonological features, however, semantic features do not seem to make up a small, well-defined class, and it is often very hard to reduce word meanings to smaller parts. Can we say, for example, that the meaning of *blue* consists of the feature [+COLOUR] and something else? If so, what is that other thing? Isn't it blueness? If so, then we still have not broken the meaning of *blue* into smaller features, and we are back where we started.

In other cases, it is unclear whether semantic features really provide any insights into the nature of the meaning they are supposed to represent. What value is there, for instance, in characterizing the meaning of *dog* in terms of the feature complex [+ANIMAL, +CANINE] so long as there is no further analysis of the concept underlying the feature [CANINE]? A similar objection could be made to the use of features like [HUMAN] and [MALE] to define *man* and *woman*.

Aids to the study of the text

1. What is the basic repository of meaning within the grammar?
2. What is extension and intension? Why are they differentiated?
3. What is understood by semantic features?
4. What is the essence of componential analysis?
5. Enumerate advantages and drawbacks of componential analysis.

Randolph Quirk

THE USE OF ENGLISH

English and the native speaker

<...> How then does English work? A language is best considered as having three quite distinct aspects or dimensions. The dimension that usually seems most obvious, even most important, is the word-stock — also known as the *vocabulary* or *lexis*. We may think of this as our total collection of *names* for things: the names of actions, objects; qualities, and so on; words like *assume*, *box*, *taxation*, *finger*, *sharp*, *table*, *extraordinary*. The total vocabulary of English is immense and runs to about half a million items. None of us as individuals, of course, knows more than a fairly limited number of these, and uses even less, but obviously the greater our personal knowledge of vocabulary (the more words we recognize and the more we know how to use), the better we are able to enjoy our environment and describe our experience of it.

<...> But a language cannot work with words alone. A group of words like *arrive*, *girl*, *man*, *say* cannot tell us much until we have added a second dimension, grammar. Grammar contributes features like articles, prepositions, tense, number, and the conventions of arrangement — which word goes before which. With grammar added, the four words we selected can be made to tell us something: “The *man* *said* that the *girls* had *arrived*”.

Grammar has done three things here. It has arranged the words in a particular order, making clear who did the saying and who the arriving. It has contributed *tense* by the alteration of *say* to *said*, and *number* by the addition of *-s* to *girl*. Thirdly, grammar has added some additional words: *the*, *that*, *the*, and *had*. This third point raises a difficulty.

We have already described the first dimension of language as “vocabulary”, the stock of *words*: now, it is being suggested that grammar also consists in part of words. At first sight, it may be confusing to find the same word, “words”, applied to part of grammar as well as to the whole of vocabulary. English has, in fact, two kinds of words, lexical words and grammatical words, and this basic distinction is important to learn — even if it is not very easy to apply in some cases. <...>

The grammatical words which play so large a part in English grammar are for the most part sharply and obviously different from the lexical words, as one can see by comparing the two sets in our present example: *the, that, the, had, and man, say, girl, arrive*. A rough and ready difference which may seem most obvious is that grammatical words have “less meaning”, and in fact some grammarians have called them the “empty” words as opposed to the “full” words of vocabulary. But this is a rather misleading way of expressing the distinction. Although a word like *the* is not the name of something as *man* is, it is very far from being meaningless; there is a sharp difference in meaning between “man is vile” and “the man is vile”, yet *the* is the sole vehicle of this difference of meaning. Moreover, grammatical words differ considerably among themselves as to the amount of meaning they have, even in the lexical sense (as we may see by comparing *the* and *should*, for example). <...>

Grammatical words, then, (or “function” words, as they are also called in some books) are vital signals telling us about the kind of connexion that is to be understood between lexical words. It is not that they have no meaning, but that they have a special kind of meaning, sometimes called “grammatical meaning” or “structural meaning”. Another important characteristic is that they belong to a relatively small and permanent set of words as compared with the “full words” of vocabulary. They do not come and go with changing fashions and changing ideas. In different occupations, in different places and at different periods, we tend to use very different nouns and verbs; *totalitarianism*, the *axis*, or *evacuee* may be very often on our lips for a while; we may invent entirely new words like *vitaminise* or *penicilin*; we may even adopt foreign words and bandy them about freely and familiarly — *blitz* in the forties, *sputnik* in the fifties, and *troika* made a frequent appearance early in the sixties. Vocabulary consists of *open* lists of words. But we very rarely add to our stock of prepositions and pronouns, and it is equally rare for an odd one to go out of fashion. Grammatical words are in (relatively) *closed* lists. <...>

When we have these two aspects of English clearly understood and distinguished, we can move on to consider the third. Language can exist only if there are means of sharing it with the rest of our community. <...> Our third dimension of language is necessarily therefore the *means of transmission*.

The transmission of language is primarily effected through the use of our breath force as modified by organs in our throat and face to make noises, which we call our “pronunciation”. <...>

But while pronunciation is primary, it is by no means the only method of transmission available to us. We can use our fingers and address someone by means of the deaf-mute alphabet, we can send messages by Morse code, and above all we can write. Important as these are, however, we must remember that they are secondary and are derived — whether immediately or ultimately — from language as *spoken* and *heard*. <...>

Words, words, words

<...> ... words are coined because an acute need is felt, but a common objection to coinages and adoptions is that they are synonyms for perfectly good words already in the language. It is rare, however, to find perfect and complete synonyms. The most one can usually say is that there are contexts which will admit a choice of two or even three possible words without noticeable difference of meaning. For example, *the rainfall in April was exceptional* or *the rainfall in April was abnormal*. These examples may give us grounds for saying that *exceptional* and *abnormal* are synonymous *in certain contexts* — but we do certainly need to add that qualification. Applied to people, these adjectives are by no means synonymous, as we may see by comparing *My son is exceptional* and *My son is abnormal*.

Like synonyms, perfect and complete antonyms are fairly rare. It is true that languages seem to offer fairly “naturally” a large measure of polarisation, but it is usual to find the antonymous polarity restricted to certain contexts. Thus *thick* is only one antonym of *thin* (“a thin slice” — “a thick slice”); another is *fat* (“a thin man” — “a fat man”). The opposite of *peculiar* in *It is a custom peculiar to some countries* is *common*;

but the opposite of *he has peculiar tastes* is not *he has common tastes* but *he has average tastes*.

There is one other important factor which interferes with the simple opposition of antonyms. In dealing with grammar, it is often useful to see some contrasts in terms of “marked” and “unmarked” members. Thus *love* and *loved* are in contrast as “present” and “past”, but only the latter is actually “marked” as such; *love* is “unmarked” and as such may be much more widely used than merely as a present in contrast with *loved*. In *Penguins live in the Antarctic*, *live* is so to speak “tenseless”, since the statement is true not merely for the present but for the past and (presumably) the future. Similarly in vocabulary, *man* — *woman*, *lion* — *lioness* are in contrast, with the second member of each pair morphologically “marked”, and we find that we can frequently use the first member (the unmarked one) to subsume the second but not vice versa. “There is a lion in this cage” does not exclude the possibility that it *may* be a lioness, but “There is a lioness in this cage” is specific. So too we may speak of “man or beast” and not exclude women: “so long as men can breathe or eyes can see”.

The notion can obviously be extended to pairs in which there is no actual *morphological* marking by morphemes like *-ed* or *-ess*. Although *horse* in some contexts may be in contrast with *mare*, *horse* can often be used to include mares, as *geese* can include ganders. In this respect, *horse* and *goose* may be thought of as “unmarked” members of a contrast. So too with many adjectives. We may agree that *old* and *young* are antonyms, as are *light* and *heavy*, *big* and *small*, *short* and *tall*. But in each of these pairs, one member is “unmarked”, as can be seen in the fact that we can ask *How old is the baby?* or *How tall is your fence?* without implying that the one is old or the other tall. It is the lack of antonymous mark which enables us also to say *It is three feet high* and the like.

Here again, in fact, we find ourselves able to speak about a word’s value only when we have it in a context in actual *use*. It is a fatuous exercise to give synonyms or antonyms for words in isolation and it is impossible to answer the question *What does the word “love” mean?* in isolation. The word is used “correctly” but quite differently in *I love my wife*, *Brotherly love*, *I love ice cream*, *Love all mankind!* and *The score is love — all*. If therefore we cannot say what the meaning of a word is until it is put into an adequate context, we should beware of thinking that the meaning resides in the word itself: it is rather spread over the

word and the neighbouring words, because only the latter identify the “semantic field”, the group of relevant associations, in which we have contrasting words by which to measure the one used. In one semantic field, for instance, *rose* operates in contrast with *tulip* and *dahlia*; in another, it is in contrast with *red* and *purple*. That use of *put out* which is in the semantic field of “fire” allows *extinguish* as a synonym; but in the field of broadcastings we would not say that the BBC had extinguished the news item that we have just heard on the radio. And in still another field, one does not extinguish the cat before going to bed. <...>

Grouping words into structures

<...> There is a further structure that we have not yet mentioned. This too can operate as an element in any other structure, but we may look upon it as intermediate between the group and the clause: it is the *phrase*. It will be remembered that the characteristic of a group is to have a head: *great bravery of many kinds* has *bravery* as its head, and *bravery* can work as well in another structure as *great bravery of many kinds* can. In a somewhat analogous way *came* can work as well in another structure as can *ought to have come*. Thus:

I admire *great bravery of many kinds*.

I admire *bravery*.

He *ought to have come* immediately.

He *came* immediately.

Groups are for this reason sometimes called *endocentric*. By contrast, phrases usually consist of a preposition and nominal group or a non-finite verbal group and a normal group and thus have no single head. Like clauses and sentences, therefore, they are characteristically what some structural linguists call *exocentric*. We may compare:

He came *immediately*.

He came *in a short time*.

He came *to get the car*.

All of these have a structure SVA (Subject, Verb, Adverbial) but in two of them the exponent of A is a phrase. We can now see the structural difference between:

I am going to climb = SV (that is what I am going to do).

I am going to climb = SVA (that is why I am going).

Finally, although it is right and natural to see the structures *sentence*, *clause*, *phrase*, *group* as forming a hierarchy (from “high” to “low”), it is important to remember that any of the last three may be exponent of an element in the structure of the sentence or of each other. This may be illustrated as follows: Group, phrase and clause in *sentence structure*:

I saw him *a few times*.

I saw him *during the holidays*.

I saw him *when I was home*.

Group, phrase and clause in *phrase structure*:

Beside *the dusty road*, he waited...

Sitting *beside the dusty road*, he waited...

Sitting, *while he watched the dusty road*, he waited...

Group, phrase and clause in *group structure*:

The surface of the dusty road seemed...

The man *coming up the dusty road* seemed...

The man *that he saw on the dusty road* seemed...

Even so brief a sketch of grammatical structure must not end without some reference to one further — and very well-known — type of grammatical relationship. In addition to the hierarchical structure already explained and illustrated, there is a coordinate structure which brings together items of equal rank in the sense that they operate as though they were a single element from the viewpoint of hierarchical structure. Consider, for example:

(1) *The men and women of London* (were pleased).

(2) *Liking neither the dull street nor the look of this particular house*, (he turned away).

(3) *When I knew him and while he worked in this office*, (he seemed happy enough).

In (1) we have co-ordinate words in group structure. That is to say, the exponent of S in the sentence is the nominal group, *the men and women of London*; the group structure is “head plus postmodification”, and the exponent of the head is the structure of co-ordination, *men and women*. In (2), on the other hand, we have co-ordinate nominal groups

which operate (despite their own differences — the one pre-modified, the other postmodified) as a single element in phrase structure. In (3) we have co-ordinate clauses which are bracketed together as exponent of A in sentence-structure: and again we note that the “equality” of the co-ordinate parts does not lie in their internal structure.

Aids to the study of the text

1. What are the three dimensions of language discussed in R. Quirk’s book?
2. What is the difference between lexical and grammatical words?
3. What are the distinguishing features of grammatical words?
4. How does R. Quirk understand the role of context in synonymy and antonymy of words?
5. What is understood by the terms “marked” and “unmarked” members of opposition?
6. What is the peculiarity of the unmarked member of antonymic opposition?
7. What is the interrelation of the word-meaning and the semantic field?
8. How does R. Quirk understand the hierarchy of sentence, clause, phrase, group?

Robert H. Robins

GENERAL LINGUISTICS

Semantics

1.4 Semantics

1.4.1 Philosophical and linguistic interest in meaning

As has already been said, the study of meaning, semantics, brings in symbol using and symbol systems outside language; but the central place of language in human symbol systems makes language very much its primary concern. The problems arising from the study and analysis of meaning have been recognized and have received attention during the whole of man’s intellectual history. Much of the work involved has been undertaken by philosophers, especially logicians. <...> The study of logic is closely connected with the study of language, however the relations between the two may be interpreted by successive generations of philosophers, since language is the vehicle of philosophical discourse and even the specially devised systems of modern symbolic logic are derived from and refer to particular types of sentence in natural languages.

The logician is, however, primarily concerned with the inferential uses of language, the formal means by which statements or propositions may be reached or inferred as valid conclusions from preceding statements or propositions acting as premises. Much of Aristotelian logic is devoted to the different types of syllogisms, as sets of premises followed by conclusions are called, that may be used in valid chains of reasoning.

The concern of the linguist for the uses of language is much wider. Formalized logical inference and philosophical discourse in general are an important part of people's use of language in several civilizations; but they are by no means the only, or indeed anything like the most frequent, uses. The linguist's concern is with language in all its uses and manifestations as part of the processes of daily living and social interaction by members of groups, as well as in the specialized applications that form the provinces of philosophers and literary critics, and the approach to meaning on the part of the linguist must be based on this much wider range of language use and types of utterance.

Semantics can be recognized as a level of linguistic description and as a component of linguistics, but it is a much less tidily circumscribed field of study than are phonetics, phonology, and grammar, unless its range is so restricted as to exclude a great deal of what the plain man and the common reader would wish to include under the heading of *meaning*, with which semantics is concerned.

What one is really trying to do in semantics, or in making statements about meaning, is to explicate, to make explicit, the ways in which words, and sentences of various grammatical constructions, are used and understood by native or fluent speakers of a language. Sentences consist of words, but of words in specific grammatical relations within constructions, and words are used in speech (and in writing) as components of sentences. This applies equally to the so-called one-word sentences, in which a single word comprises a complete sentence. Nonetheless semantics can be considered from the point of view of word meaning and from that of sentence, or structural, meaning.

1.4.2 Word meaning

Word meanings are what are sought and what should be provided in comprehensive dictionaries of a language. For much of the history of semantic studies, and still to a considerable extent today, the investigation of word meaning has been based on the relationships of reference

and denotation. Certainly meaning includes the relations between utterances and parts of utterances (e. g. words) and the world outside; and reference and denotation are among such relations. But for the purposes of linguistics it is desirable to deal with meaning by a more comprehensive treatment.

Sentences have meaning, are meaningful; and a child learns the meaning of many words by hearing them in other people's uttered sentences and practising such utterances himself subject to the correction of others and the test of being understood by those to whom he is talking. The process goes on all our lives, and we learn new words and extend and increase our knowledge of the words we already know, as we hear and see them in fresh utterances and used slightly differently from the ways which we are accustomed to. The meaning of a word, therefore, may be considered as the way it is used and understood as a part of different sentences; what the dictionary does is to try and summarize for each word the way or ways it is used in the sort of sentences in which it is found in the language.

The grammatical structure and certain phonological features such as intonation may themselves give an indication of part of its meaning, as we can easily see when we consider the part played in English and in many other languages by word form, word order, and intonation in the indication of questioning, commanding, and making statements. Though familiar in literate languages and apparently universal in all languages, word divisions are not immediately audible in connected speech, and the formal features that determine words as separable units, and the recognition of such features, intuitively by the speaker and objectively by the linguist, must be examined further within grammatical analysis.

The potential sentences of any language that may be uttered and understood by a speaker of it are infinite in number, but they are formed from the total stock of words known to the speaker at any time. A speaker's word stock is always variable, but it may be regarded as fixed at any given point in time. Words, therefore, are, in general, convenient units about which to state meanings, and no harm is done provided it is borne in mind that words have meanings by virtue of their employment in sentences, most of which contain more than one word, and that the meaning of a sentence is not to be thought of as a sort of summation of the meanings of its component words taken individually. With many words particular meanings or uses are only found when they

are used in conjunction with other words, and these are often scarcely deducible from their other uses apart from such combinations (one need only think of such phrases as *cold war*, *black market*, *wildcat strike* (unofficial strike, particularly in American English), *white noise* (in acoustic engineering). <...>

Reference and denotation are clearly a part of the meaning of many words in all languages. The many problems arising about the nature of these relations have been the subject of much philosophical discussion. Here it suffices to point out that by the use in sentences of certain words one is able to pick out from the environment and from the general knowledge of speaker and hearer particular items, features, processes, and qualities, draw attention to them, give or elicit further information about them, make them the objects of action or speculation, and, most importantly, recall them from past experience and anticipate them in the future provided only that the words used have had such associations in the previous experience of speaker and hearer. These are the words whose meanings may, in part, be learned and taught by pointing. But the relationship between the word and that to which it may be said to refer is not a simple one. Proper names (*John*, *Mary*, etc.) refer to individuals as single individuals, however many there may be so referred to; *boy*, *girl*, etc., refer to an indefinitely large class of individuals by virtue of being grouped together in some respect; in the same way, *climb*, *fly*, *swim*, and *walk* refer to four different types of bodily movement in space. In the strict terminology of logic *denotation* is sometimes used in a specific and technical sense, but in general usage the term is more loosely made equivalent to *reference*.

It is often said that the meaning of a word is the idea it conveys or arouses in the mind of speaker or hearer. This is associated with a general definition of language as “the communication of ideas by speech” or the like. Such accounts of the meaning of words and the working of languages are objectionable. *Idea* as a technical term is notoriously hard to pin down with anything like precision. It is often taken as equivalent to *mental picture* or image, for which drawings are sometimes made in books dealing with linguistic meaning. Mental pictures are no doubt perfectly genuine components of our private experience, but as such they seem of little relevance to linguistics. Firstly, it would appear that they are not aroused by anything like all the words in a language, even of those for which a referential meaning is fairly easily statable in isolation;

secondly, even in the most favourable cases, the idea as a mental picture does not help explain one's ability to use a word correctly and understand it. Any picture is necessarily particular; as Berkeley pointed out, *triangle* refers to all of the mutually exclusive sorts of triangles (isosceles, scalene, right-angled, etc.), but any picture, mental or otherwise, of a triangle must be of one triangle only. Even if we did recognize what a word referred to by having a mental picture in our mind, we should have to be able to justify the classing together of what is actually observed and the mental picture by some further piece of knowledge. It is best to regard knowledge of the meaning or meanings of a word as part of a speaker's competence, an ability to use the word in ways other people will understand and to understand it when uttered by other people; this knowledge includes knowing the range of items, processes, and the like to which words that do have referents of one sort or another may be said, often indeterminately, to refer.

The use of words in utterances to focus attention on particular bits and features of the world involves a segmentation and an organization of our experienced environment. Verbalization is not a mere passive labelling of discrete items and objects; the process of classification implicit in the use of what are often called common nouns (*boy, girl, tree, house*, etc.) has already been noticed. Moreover, the very permanence of names and designations presupposes that we recognize continuing identities in the stream of successively observed phenomena. Recognizing John today as the John of yesterday and this table today as the same as this table yesterday is more than just perceiving what is before one's eyes; it is imposing some order on such perceptions. Other words with more abstract meanings involve a much more far-reaching organization of the world of immediate experience; words like *motion, gravity, inertia, energy*, and *equilibrium* do not refer to things in the way words like *table* and *chair* do, nor do even more abstract words like *cause* and *effect* (still less do they call up definite pictures in the mind), but they have distinctive and important meanings, and their use is a mark of the high degree of order and systematization imposed by us on the world we live in. In the same way the use of words like *right* and *wrong, duty, crime* (and many others subsumed under them: *property, theft, punishment, reform*, etc.), and of comparable words in other types of society, presupposes a social nexus of expected ways of behaviour enforced by precedent and the sanctions of disapproval and legal penalties.

Quite apart from the examples just above, many words used quite ordinarily in everyday life, whose meanings are in no sense part of a specifically scientific or philosophical vocabulary, bear much more abstract and complex relations to our world of things, actions, and processes than words like *chair*, *stone*, *sun*, *kick*, and *run*. The difficulties, intricacies, and delicacies of much semantic analysis are concealed from the beginner when, as is too often the case, such words are exclusively chosen as examples in elementary semantics, just because of their rather obvious directness of reference, at least in many of their uses. One may, in this context, reflect on what is involved in the semantic analysis of such ordinary words as *succeed* (*success*), *prepare* (*preparation*), *loyal*(*ty*), and *persuade* (*persuasion*).

Some of these ways in which human life are experiences are ordered in our languages appear to be universally recognized in the use of words in all languages, and must therefore be regarded as the general property of mankind (for example, the recognition of objects occupying space and persisting through time). In other matters languages differ in the way they most readily tend to organize parts of the speakers' experience. Relatively trivial instances of such differences are the obvious non-correspondences of the colour words in different languages; more significant are the difficulties involved in trying to translate words relating to moral, religious, legal, and political matters between the languages of communities having different social systems in these respects. Such difficulties arise from the differences in peoples' ways of life, and are made prominent by the work of anthropologists in examining societies far removed historically from the Greco-Roman and Hebraic inheritance characterizing Western Europe and those countries most influenced by it. We do not all inhabit exactly the same world, and differences in the significant items of vocabulary in languages bring this out clearly.

Not only does reference cover a very wide divergence of relationship between words and the bits and pieces of the world, but many words in all languages can scarcely be said to refer to anything by themselves, for which, consequently, pointing is useless as a means of explaining their use. This does not mean that such words are meaningless, which is non-sensical, as they have quite definite uses in languages; words like English *if*, *when*, *of*, *all*, *none*, *the* are frequent and essential components of sentences. But as it has been seen that it is the utterance and the sentences in it that are the primary meaningful stretches, the meanings of the com-

ponent words must be taken as the contribution they make to the meaning of the sentences in which they appear. The fact that the contribution of some words is partly that of reference does not make reference the same as the whole of meaning; and it is not to be assumed that the meaning of a word when it constitutes a one-word sentence is the same as its meaning when it forms part of a larger sentence. There are also quite complex systems of reference involved in the uses of pronouns (*I, you, he, himself*, etc.).

The ease with which a statable meaning can be assigned to a word in isolation varies very considerably, and in part it depends on the degree to which the word is likely to occur in normal discourse as a single (one-word) sentence; and even in the case of such a favoured word one has no right in advance of the analysis to assume that there will always be found a common “core” of meaning underlying all the various uses the word has in the sentences in which it may occur. With words scarcely ever occurring in isolation, like those cited in the preceding paragraph, it is almost impossible to describe their meaning adequately in any other way than by saying how they are typically used as part of longer sentences and how those sentences are used. The question whether a word may be semantically described in isolation is more a matter of degree than of a simple answer yes or no.

Preoccupation with reference and denotation has troubled semantic theory, by putting an excessive importance on that part of word meaning which can be stated easily in isolation and treated either as a two-term relation between the word and the referent or thing meant (or between word-image and concept, *significant* and *signifie*), or as a three-term relation between word, speaker or hearer, and referent. The meanings of sentences and their parts are better treated in linguistics in terms of how they function than exclusively in terms of what they refer to. The different types of reference indicated above are then included as part of the function performed, the job done, by certain words in the sentences in which they are used, and the dictionary entry of a word simply summarizes the function or functions, referential or other, of the word in the sort of sentences in which it typically occurs.

In addition to reference, excessive emphasis on historical considerations colours popular discussion on language, especially on word meanings, as when it is urged that the “real” meaning of a word is to be found in its etymology or earlier form and use in the language. Thus it is

claimed that the “true” meaning of *holiday* is “holy-day” or day set apart for religious reasons, and that *awful* and *awfully* are wrongly used like *considerable*, *very* (*there was an awful crowd there, awfully nice of you to come*), since its “real” meaning is “awe-inspiring”.

If it is accepted that statements of word meanings in descriptive linguistics are simply summaries of the ways words are used in sentences by speakers at a particular time, it is clear that historically antecedent meanings are outside the scope of such statements. Without specialized study speakers are ignorant of the history of their language; yet they use it to communicate with each other and they understand each other. Certainly the meaning of any word is causally the product of continuous changes in its antecedent meanings or uses, and in many cases it is the collective product of generations of cultural history. Dictionaries often deal with this sort of information if it is available, but in so doing they are passing beyond the bounds of synchronic statement to the separate linguistic realm of historical explanation.

2.4. The structural treatment of linguistic meaning

2.4.1. The distributional analysis of meaning

In much of the statement of meanings in dictionary entries, the linguist necessarily looks beyond the realm of language, as he is dealing with the use of words in sentences in relation to the whole of human experience, and he may have to rely on sciences other than linguistics and on unsystematized “common sense”. For this reason some linguists have tried to redefine or reconsider meaning in so far as it is relevant to linguistics as equivalent to distribution. That is to say, the meaning of a word, as far as it concerns the linguist within the strict confines of his subject, is to be understood as the range of its occurrences in sentences consisting of other words. Just as there are probably no words exactly alike in meaning in all contexts, so there will probably be no two words in any language sharing exactly the same lexical environment (distribution). The temptations of this treatment of meaning are strong. Reliance on sciences and experience outside linguistic competence is eliminated; and, especially with the use and development of statistical methods and computer techniques (the mechanical collection and sorting of data),

considerable precision and exhaustiveness, not available in semantics otherwise, seems within reach.

The objection, however, to this method of treating meaning is that it fails to “save the phenomena”. Meaning is everywhere understood as involving the relation of language to the rest of the world, and such meaningfulness is an essential part of any definition of language. Distributional studies enable one to state a great deal about the total functioning and use of words in a language, but just not what is ordinarily understood to be their meanings and what is rightly expected from the entries in a dictionary, for which information such traditional terms as reference and denotation, and more modern systems of analysis such as context of situation, however imprecise they may be in many cases, have been devised.

The distributional approach to meaning, while inadequate as a complete treatment of it, or at least as the way one would ordinarily expect it to be treated, brings to notice the significant fact that part of the total meaning of many words in all languages is to be determined by their individual relations with other words, in both the basic dimensions of linguistic analysis, syntagmatic and paradigmatic. Words, as individual lexical items, are structurally related to each other in languages and the uses of languages, as they are as members of grammatical classes and as are grammatical and phonological elements generally, though in different ways. The syntagmatic relations between words as lexical items have been studied under the title of *collocation*, and the paradigmatic relations are considered in the theories of the *linguistic field*.

2.4.2. Collocation

By *collocation* is meant the habitual association of a word in a language with other particular words in sentences. Collocation is distinct from syntax in that one is concerned in collocation with each word as an individual lexical item in the company of other words as individual lexical items, and not, as in syntax, part of the grammatical level of analysis, with words as members of classes in relation to other words also as members of classes. Speakers become accustomed to the collocations of words and the mutual expectancies that hold between them in utterances irrespective of their grammatical relations as members of word classes or as “parts of speech”. A rather obvious example is given by Firth, who made use of the term as part of the technical terminology of linguistics: *dark* collocates with *night*, and vice versa. “One of the mean-

ings of *night* is its collocability with *dark*, and of *dark*, of course, collocation with *night*.” This statement does not, of course, exclude word groups like *bright night*, *dark day*, but just because of the less usual concomitance of such pairs, they stand out as more prominent in an utterance in which they occur than do *dark night* and *bright day*. Collocations such as these are manifestly related to the referential and situational meaning of the words concerned, but collocation and situational meaning are different parts of the total statement of the use of words. In some other cases collocations are habitual but less closely connected with extralinguistic reference. *White coffee*, *black coffee*, *white wine*, *white race* all have a range of situational reference, but apart from the collocation of the particular second words in each pair the word *white* would not, in most utterances, be used with reference to the colours of the referents. Similar collocations in English involving colour words, but further removed from reference to actual colour surfaces, are *green with jealousy*, *red revolution*, *purple passage*. Some words in languages have, at least in certain styles, very limited uses, almost wholly circumscribable in their collocations. The word *maiden*, for example, in modern spoken English, is scarcely ever used as a synonym for *girl*, but principally occurs in collocation with a limited set of other words such as *voyage*, *speech*, *over* (in cricket), *aunt*, *lady* (English speakers can readily supply the others).

Conversely, words like *the*, *a*, *if*, *when*, and so on are hardly subject to any collocational restrictions, and are found in almost any lexical company in the language that the grammar permits. For such words collocation is not a relevant part of the statement of their use; but with others (the majority) it is possible to set up collocational ranges of words with which given words will be found associated in their various grammatical constructions. The conjunction of two or more words quite outside the range of collocation and unprepared by any explanation, is likely to be incomprehensible or downright nonsensical, although its grammatical composition may be unexceptionable. A now famous example of such a grammatical but nonsensical sentence is: “Colourless green ideas sleep furiously”.

Collocational ranges are unlike grammatical classes in that they are peculiar to each word, and almost certainly no two words in a language share exactly the same range and frequency of occurrence within a range, whereas grammatical classes may each contain many different

words as members. Moreover collocations are far more personally variable among speakers of a single dialect within a language than are grammatical classes; borderline cases there are in grammar, where speakers may differ or be uncertain, as to whether a particular word form or word sequence is grammatically acceptable; but these are very few compared to the personal differences in collocational use and acceptance.

Sometimes different styles, types of utterance appropriate to specific types of situation are characterized by different collocations (consider the differences between *He's a proper rascal* and *that is a very proper observation*, and between *we've had a nice time today* and *we have here a nice point to decide*).

<...> Special cases of collocations are what are called idioms and clichés. *Idiom* is used to refer to habitual collocations of more than one word, that tend to be used together, with a semantic function not readily deducible from the other uses of its component words apart from each other (e. g. English *she went for him hammer and tongs, they ran off hell for leather*). Knowledge of such individual features of a language, acquired by long experience, but unnecessary for ordinary intercourse, usually comes at the end of one's learning of a foreign language; hence a complete and near-complete mastery of one is often said to be "idiomatic". Some idioms preserve in use words that have otherwise become obsolete (e. g. English *to and fro, waifs and strays, kith and kin*).

When a collocation has become almost universal in a particular style, the contribution of some of its words comes to be nugatory, and often appears irritating and inelegant to listeners or readers who do not relish (as some seem to) that mode of discourse (for example the house agent's *desirable residence* (residence), the politician's *this modern age in which we are living* (this age), the journalist's *inside information* (information); the reader will be painfully able to multiply the examples from his own experience). Clichés of this sort form a notable part of the public speaking style of many politicians all over the world, presumably because of intellectual laziness or in the hope of appealing to the emotions of people in political meetings, broadcasts, and the like, by the repeated use of words, such as *freedom, peace*, etc., to which favourable responses are normally accorded; cliché-ridden talk is a good deal easier to produce than a serious examination of current political problems.

2.4.3. Semantic field theory

The theory (or theories, as the basic conception has been developed in different ways) of the *linguistic field*, or the field theory of meaning, is concerned to show that the lexical content of a language, its total vocabulary, or such of it as is available to a speaker at any time, is not a mere conglomeration or aggregation of independent items, and that word meanings cannot be understood or adequately described as if it were. Word meaning is best understood as the contribution a word can make to the meaning or function of the sentences in which it may appear; and this depends, not just on its reference, or any other aspect of its meaning considered simply as the property of the word in isolation from all other words in the language. In part the meaning and use of most words are governed by the presence in the language of availability to a speaker of other words whose semantic functions are related in one or more ways to the same area of situational environment or culture.

It was observed above that the use of many words presupposes the imposition of order and stability on the sequences of sensory experience, and that the employment of certain words rests on a high degree of such abstract ordering. It appears that certain features of this sort of ordering are universal, or at least very general, and this is the basis of the translatability of the utterance of one language into those of another; but other features are peculiar to particular cultural traditions of particular areas, with the consequence that the translation of words and sentences relating to such features requires more explanation and circumlocution. In no case is the lexical content of a language equivalent to a nomenclature, the labelling with separate words of independently existing entities. Nomenclature is possible when linguistic labels are secondarily put to entities already distinguished as a class by the lexicon of a language, as in the cases of the naming of individual houses in a street, of streets in a town, or of rooms in a mansion. "The world as we know it" is in part the product both of our culture and of the lexical system of our own language.

In a language each word with a reference to the external world bears the meaning it does, functions as it does in sentences, in that it relates to a part of the world in some way differently from all other words. Every such word is, therefore, determined in its meaning by the presence of other words in the vocabulary of the language related to the same or to associated ranges of phenomena, and its meaning is liable to be further determined

or altered both by the appearance of other words in a speaker's available vocabulary or by changes in the meanings of associated words.

By the nature of things as they are perceived by all men, and by the nature of certain specific aspects of different cultures, some words are more tightly bound in systems than others, and the semantic fields involved are more readily separated. Colour terms, which notoriously do not correspond from one language to another, are an obvious example of naturally delimited fields. Every language has a range of words that divide up the potentially all but unlimited range of colour differences in visible phenomena. It is probable that children learn the principal colour words fairly closely together in time (e. g. in English, *red, green, blue, yellow, white, black*; the fact that green is not a primary colour and that white and black are not colours in the sense that the others are is not relevant here). Certainly one only knows the meaning of *red* as a colour word (knows how to use it in a sentence) when one knows also the colour words bordering on it in various directions (*pink, purple, orange, brown*, etc.) and the principal words for colours comprised within the class designated by red (e. g. *vermillion, scarlet, rose*).

Colour constitutes a naturally separable field of reference; or semantic field, for which every language may be expected to provide sets of lexical terms in which the meaning of each is determined by the co-presence of the others in a speaker's vocabulary. It is well known that languages do not correspond in their most used colour vocabulary. Welsh *gwyrd, glas*, and *llwyd* roughly cover the same colour range as English *green, blue, grey*, and *brown*, but do not have the same approximate boundaries. The same surfaces designated *green, blue* and *grey* in English might all be called *glas* in Welsh. Likewise in Japanese the adjective *aoi* refers to much of the range of colour distinguished in English by *blue* and *green*.

Military ranks and ranks of any strictly hierarchical organization of people in relationship of seniority, command, and subordination are examples of a culturally produced field that is closely delimited and ordered. Part of the meaning of any military rank word (*major, captain, corporal*, etc.) is the product of the whole system of such terms in the relevant part of the language and of the exact place of each in relation to the others. These factors may be decisive in the translation of words referring to ranks in armed services and the like from one language to another.

In a very practical context of situation, the selection and grading of hotels, the word *good* has a very different meaning when used non-technically (in the field of *bad*, *indifferent*, etc.) from when it is used, as it is by some travel agents, in a strictly limited system of comparative gradings as the lowest in the field of *first class*, *luxurious*, *superior*, *good*.

Part of the power and flexibility of language lies in the ability of speakers to multiply their vocabulary in any given field in the interests of greater precision and clarity. It follows that the more words there are closely associated in meaning the more specific each one's meaning may be in the particular field (irrespective of its uses in other fields). As an organization becomes more complex and its members more numerous, new ranks and grades appropriately named may be devised, restricting the holders to an exact place in the hierarchy. Occupations whose operations involve much colour discrimination (paint manufacture, textile manufacture, etc.) develop an extensive technical vocabulary, partly from existing colour words, partly by adding new and specialized meanings to words having reference to coloured things (e. g. *magnolia*, *cream*), partly by adapting other words and phrases to give them a definite place in the technical field of colour terms (*summer blue*, *mistletoe green*, etc.). Such technical vocabularies may sometimes employ numbers of words unknown to non-technical speakers of the language and devise meanings for others quite different from those they bear outside these specialized contexts.

The supreme example of this infinite flexibility is in the use of numerical terms with reference to measurable features of the world. Between any two adjacent number terms another may be added for greater precision; between *eleven* and *twelve* may be put *eleven and a half*, and between *eleven* and *eleven and a half* may be put *eleven and a quarter*, and so on indefinitely. Those who speak of the infinite divisibility of matter may be doing no more than drawing attention to this potentiality of the mathematical language of the physical sciences.

It is apparent from the investigation of collocations and semantic field associations in their relations with the full description and analysis of the meanings of words, that syntagmatic and paradigmatic relations are nearly as important in dealing with the lexicon of a language as they are at the levels of grammar and phonology. Internal relations of elements within complex wholes are of the essence of language. “Un système ou tout se tient”, one all-embracing system, was the characterization

of language by the French linguist Meillet. This emphasizes one of the most fundamental features of language and of the treatment of language in modern linguistics. But it might be more appropriate to think not so much of one overall system, as of many interlocking and interdependent structures and systems at all levels, the functions of every linguistic element and abstraction being dependent on its relative places therein.

Aids to the study of the text

1. What is the essence of semantics?
2. What is word meaning?
3. State the difference between reference and denotation. What are the relations between these notions?
4. What is understood by the distributional approach to meaning?
5. What is the difference between the syntagmatic and paradigmatic relations between words?
6. What is understood by the term “collocation”?
7. What difference does R. H. Robins see between “collocations”, “clichés” and what does he call “idioms”?
8. What is understood by semantic (linguistic) field?

Stephen Ullmann

LANGUAGE AND STYLE

Part I. Problems of meaning

Chapter I. Semantics at the Cross-Roads

Just over eighty years ago, a new term was introduced into linguistic studies. In 1883 the French philologist Michel Breal published an article on what he called the “intellectual laws” of language. In this he argued that, alongside of phonetics and morphology, the study of the formal elements of human speech, there ought also to be a science of meaning, which he proposed to call *la semantique*, by a word derived from the Greek “sign” (cf. *semaphore*). The branch of study advocated in this article was not entirely new; yet it was mainly Breal’s generation, and in the first place Breal himself, who established semantics as a discipline

in its own right. In 1897 he published his *Essai de semantique* which saw many subsequent editions and is still widely read. <...> Three years after its publication, Breal's *Essai* was translated into English under the title *Semantics: Studies in the Science of Meaning*, and although the term had been used in English a few years earlier, this translation played a decisive role in the diffusion of the new science and its name.

Semantics ought to set an example to other sciences in the avoidance of ambiguity, and it is somewhat paradoxical that the term itself has become highly ambiguous in recent years. Since the 1920s the philosophers have acquired their own brand, or brands, of semantics, which have very little in common with the homonymous science practised by philologists. Philosophical semantics in the more esoteric sense of the term is a branch of the "theory of signs", dealing with relations between signs and what they stand for. In its more popular sense, philosophical semantics is a study of the misuse of abstractions, and of other shortcomings of language. <...>

At the time when semantics appeared on the scene, the science of language was an exclusively historical discipline. Semantics wholeheartedly accepted this orientation, and for the first half-century of its existence it remained a purely historical study. Its prime purpose was the classification of changes of meaning according to logical, psychological or sociological criteria, and the discovery of any abiding tendencies — misleadingly called "semantic laws" — which governed these changes. This phase found its crowning achievement in Gustaf Stern's *Meaning and Change of Meaning, with Special Reference to the English Language*, which was published in 1931 and contained the first scheme of classification based on an extensive collection of concrete data. Meanwhile, however, far-reaching changes had taken place in general linguistics, as a result of which semanticists were soon faced with a dilemma which remains unresolved to this very day.

In the early years of the present century, linguistics underwent what has been rightly described as a "Copernican revolution". This revolution, which was ushered in by the posthumous publication, in 1916, of Ferdinand de Saussure's *Cours de linguistique generale*, showed itself in two main ways. Firstly, the historical bias: of nineteenth century philology gave way to a broader view which admitted the existence of two approaches to language, one descriptive or "synchronic", the other historical or "diachronic", and boldly proclaimed the primacy of the

descriptive method because it is more akin to the attitude of the ordinary speaker. The second great change concerned the way in which the tasks of descriptive linguistics were conceived. Language came to be viewed, not as an aggregate of discrete elements but as an organized totality, a *Gestalt*, which has a pattern of its own and whose components are interdependent and derive their significance from the system as a whole. In Saussure's famous simile, language is like a game of chess: you cannot add, remove or displace any element without affecting the entire field of force. In the United States, thinking about the fundamental structure of language developed on similar lines; the new approach was codified with remarkable precision and rigour in Leonard Bloomfield's book *Language* (1933), which, second only to Saussure's *Cours*, is easily the most influential work on linguistics published so far in this century.

The new conception of language, which has come to be known by the name of *structuralism*, has sometimes been carried to unreasonable lengths. To assert, as has been often done, that language is a system where everything hangs together — “un système ou tout se tient” — is obviously unrealistic. The late Professor Entwistle was nearer the mark when he wrote: “I do not find language either systematic or wholly unsystematic, but impressed with patterns, generally incomplete, by our pattern-making minds.” Be that as it may, the idea of an underlying pattern has proved an extremely fruitful working hypothesis. It has been applied with conspicuous success to the phonological side of language where it has yielded the invaluable concept of “phoneme” or “distinctive sound”. From phonology, there has been a gradual shift of interest to morphological structure where the theory has produced another useful though more controversial concept: that of the “morpheme” or “minimum significant unit of language” — a diverse category which comprises simple words, prefixes and suffixes, inflexions, non-independent roots and other elements, including even the intonation of the sentence. The structuralist theory has also made an impact on syntax where it has given rise, during the last few years, to an entirely new and promising technique known as “transformational grammar”. Even the reconstruction of extinct languages has benefited by the advent of the structural approach. Semantics, too, has felt the need to align itself with the rest of linguistics by adopting structuralist viewpoints, but these attempts have so far met with less success than in other branches of language study.

The reasons for this discrepancy are not far to seek: they lie in the very nature of the subject. Whereas the phonological and even the grammatical resources of a language are closely organized and limited in number, the vocabulary is a loose assemblage of a vast multitude of elements. The numerical contrast is striking: a recent authority states that there are forty-four or forty-five phonemes in English while on the other hand the Oxford Dictionary is said to contain over 400 000 words: a ratio of nearly 1 to 10 000! But there is an equally sharp contrast in cohesion and stability. The phonological and grammatical system, though subject to long-term changes, is relatively stable at a given moment, whereas the vocabulary is in a perpetual state of flux. New words are continuously formed or borrowed from outside sources to fill a genuine gap or to suit the whims of the speaker; new meanings are attached to old words... <...>

It is clear, then, that the vast, unstable and loosely organized congeries of words which we call vocabulary can not be analysed with the same scientific rigour and precision as the phonological and grammatical system of a language. This does not mean, however, that words are not amenable to any kind of structural treatment. It is here rather than in other sectors of language that we are likely to find the incomplete patterns envisaged in Entwistle's formula. In the search for such patterns, some linguists and other scholars have evolved, since the early thirties, a number of different techniques from which a new, structurally oriented semantics has begun to emerge. These experiments fall into three main groups: those which aim at a statistical analysis of word-frequency and other lexical features; those which seek to identify the characteristic tendencies of a language; lastly, those which are concerned with the way the vocabulary is built up, with the principles and the hierarchy of values which underlie its structure.

1. The *statistical* approach has become of late very popular in linguistics, not only because of the precision and objectivity which it is held to guarantee, but also because language is a mass phenomenon *par excellence*, which seems to invite this kind of treatment. In semantics, one of the boldest attempts to introduce statistical methods was made by the late Q. K. Zipf in his book, *Human Behaviour and the Principle of Least Effort* (1949), and in other writings. Zipf's analysis was based on the assumption that words work like ordinary tools and are subject to the same laws which govern the use of tools. The analogy between words

and tools was by no means new, but Zipf pursued it to its ultimate implications. He argued that, just as there is a direct relationship between the frequency of the use of a tool and the diversity of the uses to which it is put, in the same way “we may expect to find a direct relationship between the number of different meanings of a word and its relative frequency of occurrences”. He even found a mathematical formula for this relationship: with the possible exception of the few dozen most frequent words of a language, “different meanings of a word will tend to be equal to the square root of its relative frequency”.

The ordinary linguist is here on unfamiliar ground; yet he cannot help feeling somewhat alarmed at the very precision of the result. His experience with word-meanings has taught him that they are seldom as precise, as sharply delimited, as Zipf’s formula would suggest. He has come to view with some scepticism the dictionary method — inevitable but none the less misleading — of setting up the various meanings of a word as so many independent entities; he knows that, more often than not, these meanings have no clear-cut demarcation lines but rather a kind of hazy fringe through which they imperceptibly merge into each other; they are, as Wittgenstein once put it, “concepts with blurred edges”. Zipf was no doubt on the right track when he discerned a correlation between word frequency and diversity of meaning; but he built on insecure foundations when he tried to give his findings, based on dictionary data, a mathematical formulation to which the material just does not lend itself.

<...> ...There are many ways in which statistical methods can be usefully applied to semantic problems. In recent years there have also been hopeful signs of cooperation between semantics and communication theory; a leading authority on cybernetics actually went so far as to claim that there is no “fundamental opposition between the problems of our engineers in measuring communication and the problems of our philologists”. At a practical level, electronic computers and other mechanical devices have already been applied with good effect to a wide variety of lexical data. At the same time, these new contacts, however valuable, are bound to create serious problems of communication. The situation was neatly summed up a quarter of a century ago by one of the champions of mathematical linguistics: “...both philology and mathematics are essentially esoteric subjects, the latter more so than the former. This means that the mathematics will not be intelligible to someone who is not a mathematician

and the philology will, at the best, be difficult for someone who is not a philologist”. Unfortunately, these difficulties are only too often disregarded by mathematicians and even by mathematically minded linguists. “Flaunting mathematical formulae before a linguistic audience or in a linguistic publication”, writes Professor A. Martinet, “is either grossly misinterpreting the needs and capacities of one’s audience or readers, or else trying to bully them into accepting one’s views by claiming for these the support of a science they tend to respect as the most exact of all sciences, but whose data they are not in a position to verify. We need more and more rigour in linguistics, but our own brand”.

2. A second avenue of approach to structural semantics is through what is sometimes called *idiomatology*: the study of the unique and idiosyncratic structure of a language. As far back as 1921, one of the pioneers of structural linguistics, Edward Sapir, wrote these prophetic words: “It must be obvious to anyone who has thought about the question at all or who has felt something of the spirit of a foreign language that there is such a thing as a basic plan, a certain cut, to each language. This type or plan or structural “genius” of the language is something much more fundamental, much more pervasive, than any single feature, of it that we can mention, nor can we gain an adequate idea of its nature by a mere recital of the sundry facts that make up the grammar of a language.”

Sapir’s words refer in the first place to grammatical structure, but it seems intrinsically probable that the vocabulary too, if properly explored, will reveal some idiosyncratic tendencies, some characteristic preferences and aversions for certain modes of expression. These tendencies vary from language to language and may even change within the history of the same idiom. Some of them are capable of a strictly statistical formulation; others are less sharply defined, but stand out all the same very clearly. A good example in point is the ratio of *transparent and opaque terms* in a particular language. Greek philosophers were already divided into two camps in their views on the origin and nature of words: some regarded them as purely conventional symbols, while others believed in an intrinsic connexion between sound and meaning — a connexion which may have lost its transparency in the course of time. Modern linguists know that there are both transparent and opaque words in any language, and they seek to determine the factors which govern the dosage of the two elements. It has been found, for example, that English and French often have opaque, unanalysable names for objects

and ideas which are denoted in German by transparent, self-explanatory terms. There are several symptoms of this relative opacity of English and French. A foreigner hearing the English word *thimble* or the French *de* for the first time will have to memorize them as they contain no clue to their meaning. But the corresponding German term, *Fingerhut*, is immediately understood if you know its two components, and it is also easy to remember because of the graphic metaphor which lies at its root: a hat put on a finger. The same may be said of English *glove* and French *gant* versus German *Handschuh* ('hand' + 'shoe'), or of English *skate* and French *patin* versus German *Schlittschuh* ('sledge' + 'shoe'). <...>

German also possesses many derivatives, formed by means of prefixes and suffixes, where English and French have to use Greek or Latin formations. From the noun *Stadt* "town", German can derive the adjective *stadtisch*, while English and French have the hybrid pairs *town* — *urban*, *ville* — *urbain*. <...> The prevalence of opaque terms in English and French throws an additional burden on the memory of foreigners learning these languages, though this will often be compensated by the international character of many English and French words which in German have more parochial equivalents. Among native speakers, the use of so many learned Greek and Latin terms tends to erect what has been called a "language bar" between different sections of the population according to their educational background, a problem which does not exist in Germany in such an acute form.

The contrast between transparent and opaque words is only one criterion in the study of semantic tendencies, there are other criteria which are perhaps of even greater importance: preference for particular or generic terms, the distribution and organization of synonymic resources, the various types of ambiguity and their remedies, etc. <...>

3. Attempts have also been made to identify and describe the various *lexical structures* into which our words are organized. These inquiries, which are still at a tentative stage, are being conducted at three superimposed levels: that of single words, that of conceptual spheres, and that of the vocabulary as a whole.

(a) At the level of single words, the most useful concept that has emerged so far is that of the *associative field*. Every word is surrounded by a network of associations which connect it with other terms related to it in form, in meaning, or in both; as Saussure graphically put it, it is "like the centre of a constellation, the point where an indefinite number

of coordinated terms converge.” To take a very simple example, the verb *to write* stands at the point of intersection of three associative series: (1) derivatives formed from the same stem: *writing, writer, underwrite, writ*, etc.; (2) words of similar or related meaning: *scribble, scrawl; letter, script, pen, print; read, say, speak*, etc.; (3) homonymous words: *wright, rite, right*. In (1) the association, is based on both sound and sense; in (2) on sense alone, and in (3) on a chance identity of sound.

The associative field of a word is an unstable and highly variable structure: it differs from one speaker to another, from one social group to another, and possibly even from one situation to another. It has been described as a “halo which surrounds the sign and whose outer fringes merge into their environment”. In spite of its vagueness and its lack of sharp contours, it is a linguistic reality which can be studied by psychological as well as philological methods. <...>

(b) Between the associative fields of single words and the vocabulary in its entirety, there is an intermediate level which has attracted much attention in recent years: that of conceptual spheres or *lexical fields*. The concept of lexical field first arose in the 1920s and was developed by Professor Jost Trier in his famous monograph on German terms for intellectual qualities. Trier’s view of language has been described as “neo-Humboldtian”, and it certainly has many affinities with the ideas of Humboldt and other German thinkers, in particular E. Cassirer; but it is essentially an application of Saussurean principles to problems of lexical structure. Close study of the history of intellectual terminology in Old and Middle High German convinced Trier that it was fundamentally wrong to consider words in isolation: they must be viewed within the context of the lexical field to which they belong. A lexical field is a closely organized sector of the vocabulary, whose elements fit together and delimit each other like pieces in a mosaic. In each field some sphere of experience is analysed, divided up and classified in a unique way. In this sense, the vocabulary of every language embodies a peculiar vision of the universe; it implies a definite philosophy of life and hierarchy of values which is handed down from one generation to another.

How differently the raw material of experience is elaborated by various languages can be seen even in such a pre-eminently concrete field as the scale of *colours*. The spectrum is a continuous band, without any sharp boundaries; the number and nature of colour distinctions is therefore largely a matter of habit and convention. The Greeks and

Romans had a poorer palette than our modern languages; there was, for example, no generic term for “brown” or “grey” in Latin: modern Romance forms like French *brun* and *gris* are borrowings from Germanic. There is no single word for “grey” in modern Lithuanian either; different words are used to denote the grey colour of wool, of horses, cows or human hair. Colour terms employed in other languages will often appear more differentiated, or less differentiated, than our own, although it would be more correct to say that the field is divided up on different principles. Thus Russian distinguishes between *sinij* “dark blue” and *goluboj* “sky-blue”; conversely, the Greek word has a wide range of applications, some with and some without a notion of colour: “gleaming, silvery; bluish-green, light blue, grey”. <...>

It might be argued that language may have an important part to play in the analysis of a continuum, but that fields of experience where there are discrete elements will everywhere have the same linguistic structure. A glance at *kinship* terms in various languages shows that this is not so. It is, for example, surprising to learn that Hungarian had no term for “brother” or “sister” till the middle of the nineteenth century; it had instead, and still has, separate words for “elder” and “younger brother” and “elder” and “younger sister”. Malay has again a different arrangement: it has a generic term for “sibling or cousin” and more specialized ones for “elder” and “younger sibling or cousin”, the latter being further subdivided into male and female. Other family relations show the same diversity. In Swedish there is no single word for “grandfather” and “grandmother”, only separate ones for “father’s father”, *farfar*, “mother’s father”, *morfar*, and for the two kinds of grandmother: *far-mor* and *mormor*. <...>

Starting from rather different premises, the French linguist G. Matore has evolved a field concept closely akin to Trier’s, but marked by a strong sociological bias. In his book, *La Methode en lexicologie* (1953), he has outlined a technique for studying the structure of the vocabulary as a reflection of the structure of society. His conceptual spheres are mapped out on the basis of sociological criteria, and organized around two types of important words: *mots-temoins* (‘witness-words’), which occupy a prominent place in the hierarchy, and *mots-cles* (‘key-words’), which epitomize the leading ideals of each generation. M. Matore has given an illustration of his procedure in his remarkable monograph on vocabulary and society in the age of Louis-Philippe.

(c) Some linguists believe that the structural approach, which has been tried out so successfully at the level of single words and conceptual spheres, can be extended to embrace the entire *vocabulary* of a language. To this end, R. Hallig and W. von Wartburg have devised a general classification of concepts which, in their view, is both broad and flexible enough to be applied to any idiom. In this scheme, which springs basically from the same idea as Roget's *Thesaurus*, concepts are divided into three groups, each of them with numerous subdivisions: the Universe, Man, and Man and the Universe. The aim is to provide a uniform framework for lexicological studies of different languages and different periods of the same language, so that the results should be readily comparable with each other. Without claiming any special virtues for this scheme, which is only one of many possible arrangements, the adoption of a common framework offers obvious practical advantages, and a beginning has already been made in applying it in lexicological inquiries.

It can be seen from the foregoing that considerable progress has been made, during the last three decades, in the introduction of structural view-points into semantics. It is indeed symptomatic of current interest in these problems that structural semantics appeared on the agenda of the last two international congresses of linguistics, held at Oslo in 1957 and at Cambridge, Massachusetts, in 1962. All this makes it surprising and regrettable that many structuralists should still feel disinclined to handle problems of meaning. As a leading American linguist once put it, "for many linguistic students the word *meaning* itself has almost become anathema". It has been suggested that language could be defined in such a way that semantic problems would lie outside the purview of linguistics proper. As Professor W. S. Allen pertinently remarked in his recent inaugural lecture at Cambridge: "Meaning, as at least one linguist has expressed it, has become a 'dirty word'; but if the name tends to be avoided, there is no doubt that every linguist employs the concept, though some would be unwilling to admit to such improper thoughts." At the London congress of linguistics in 1952, the term *crypto-semantics* was coined to describe this paradoxical attitude.

Some of this reluctance to deal with semantic problems undoubtedly started as a reaction against the indiscriminate use of the term *meaning* and other "mentalist" abstractions; but this is surely no sufficient reason for excluding the semantic side of language from the field of linguistics. <...>

Another reason for the avoidance of semantics by many linguists is the widespread belief that structural viewpoints are inapplicable to problems of meaning. In the light of recent developments in semantics, this position is, as we have seen, no longer tenable — unless, of course, the term *structure* is equated with “formal structure”, as is only too often the case.

But there is an even deeper cause for the structuralists’ refusal to tackle problems of meaning. For the reasons mentioned earlier on in this chapter, semantic phenomena cannot usually be described with the same scientific rigour as the formal elements of language, and to many linguists scientific rigour is the supreme test of scholarship, even where the subject-matter would invite a different method of approach. This attitude explains why, not so long ago, semantics was virtually ostracized by extreme structuralists. The last few years have witnessed a spectacular change of climate in linguistics, but one still has the impression that many structuralists are merely paying lip-service to a study which has become more respectable. If this formalistic bias were to be perpetuated, linguistics would develop into a strangely unbalanced discipline and would lose much of its humanistic content. It would become an esoteric study, unable to contribute to the solution of the great problems of our time, some of which are closely bound up with the nature of our words. In this sense, not only semantics but linguistics at large is at the cross-roads, and the direction it will take may determine its future for a long time to come.

Chapter III. **Semantics and Etymology**

C. Etymology and the motivation of words

As already noted, the etymology of words is closely bound up with their “motivation”: the question whether there is an intrinsic connexion between sound and sense or whether our words are purely conventional symbols, mere “tokens current and accepted for concepts, as moneys are for values”. The whole problem, which has exercised many philosophers, writers and linguists, has been fully re-examined during the last quarter of a century, and valuable new insights have been gained into the workings of motivation and the principles of word-structure. There are four main points in particular which have been considerably clarified by recent research:

1. We now know that the real issue is not whether words in general are conventional or motivated, opaque or transparent, since both types are present, in varying proportions, in any linguistic system. We also know that motivation itself is a highly complex phenomenon which may work in three different ways:

- (a) Onomatopoeic words like *crash*, *rumble*, *swish*, *whizz*, *zoom* are *phonetically motivated*: there is direct correspondence between the sounds and the sense. The uses of this principle in poetry are innumerable, nor are they by any means confined to the imitation of noises. Sounds may also evoke light and colour, as well as states of mind and moral qualities.
- (b) A great many words are motivated by their *morphological structure*. A compound like *ash-tray* or *motorway*, a derivative-like *intake* or *fellowship*, will be readily intelligible to all who know their components. Even such unorthodox formations as *beautility*, *automation* or *meritocracy* were perfectly comprehensible when we met them for the first time, though some others, such as *beatnik* or *brinkmanship*, whilst transparent in themselves (*beatnik* is obviously, based on *sputnik*, *brinkmanship* on *showmanship*, *penmanship*, etc.), can be fully understood only in the light of the special circumstances which called them into existence.
- (c) There is also a third type of motivation. If we use a word in a transferred meaning, metaphorical or otherwise, the result will be *semantically motivated*: it will be transparent thanks to the connexion between the two senses. Thus, when we speak of the *root* of an evil, the *branches* of a science, an offensive nipped in the *bud*, the *flower* of a country's manhood, the *fruits* of peace, or a *family-tree*, the use of these botanical terms is not arbitrary, but motivated by some kind of similarity or analogy between their concrete meanings and the abstract phenomena to which they are applied.

Processes (b) and (c), morphological and semantic motivation, could be bracketed under the more general heading of "etymological motivation" since they concern words derived from existing elements whereas phonetic motivation involves the creation of completely new forms. This also means that etymological motivation is always "relative": the result is transparent but the elements themselves are opaque unless they

happen to be phonetically motivated. To look again at some of the examples just cited, *ash-tray* is analysable but *ash* and *tray* are not; *fellowship* is motivated but *fellow* and the suffix *-ship* are conventional; “the *root* of an evil” is a self-explanatory metaphor whereas *root* in the literal sense is opaque. Onomatopoeia alone can provide ultimate motivation in language.

2. A second principle elaborated by semantics is that of the *variability* of motivation. The proportion of transparent and opaque terms in a given language, and the relative frequency of the various types of motivation, depends on a multiplicity of factors; it varies characteristically from one idiom to another and may even differ between successive periods of the same language. <...>

3. Another important principle is that of the *mutability* of motivation. A word which was once motivated may seem conventional today; conversely, a term which was originally opaque, or had lost its transparency, may become motivated, or remotivated, at a later stage. Nothing could be less expressive than English *touch* or French *toucher*; yet they go back to Vulgar Latin *toccare*, from the onomatopoeic *toe* “knock, tap”. The morphological structure of a word may become similarly obscured. In English *maintain* and French *maintenir*, the meaning of the two Latin components, *manus* “hand” and *tenere* “to hold”, has become totally eclipsed... <...>

4. Yet another fundamental principle is that of the *subjectivity* of these processes. For a creative writer interested in word-origins and sensitive to linguistic nuances, a term may retain its pristine transparency, or may even acquire unsuspected powers of evocation and suggestion, where the ordinary reader perceives no trace of motivation. It is in the field of onomatopoeia in particular that writers give free rein to their imagination. <...>

Proper names are particularly apt to be caught up in such sound and sense associations. Some of these may have a private background, as in the case of the German poet Morgenstern who once declared that all sea-gulls look as if their name was *Emma*. <...>

Part II. Problems of style

Chapter VI. New Bearings in Stylistics

Although the term *stylistics* goes back to the Romantic period, the discipline itself did not become established in its modern form until the early years of the present century. From the very outset, the new science

developed along two different lines. One school of thought was interested in the stylistic resources of particular languages, in the expressive devices which they place at the disposal of the speaker and the writer. The other school was more concerned with the use to which these resources are put in the hands of creative authors. We shall therefore have to distinguish between two main types of stylistic study: those which explore the style of a language and those which are focused on the style of a writer.

II Evocative Devices

Stylistics is usually regarded as a special division of linguistics; since, however, it has a point of view which is peculiar to it and distinguishes it from all other branches of linguistic study, it would perhaps be more logical to regard it as a sister science concerned not with the elements of language as such, but with their expressive potential. On this reading, stylistics will have the same subdivisions as linguistics. If one accepts the view that there are three distinct levels of linguistic analysis: phonological, lexical and syntactical, then stylistic analysis will have to distinguish between the same three levels. “Stylistics of the sound”, or *phonostylistics*, will deal, among other things, with the utilization of onomatopoeia for expressive purposes; some aspects of this problem have already been touched upon in earlier chapters. “Stylistics of the word” will explore the expressive resources available in the vocabulary of a language; it will investigate the stylistic implications of such phenomena as word-formation (Lewis Carroll’s and James Joyce’s portmanteau words), synonymy, ambiguity, or the contrast between vague and precise, abstract and concrete, rare and common terms. The study of imagery <...> will occupy a prominent place at this level of style analysis. Finally, “stylistics of the sentence” will examine the expressive values of syntax at three superimposed planes: components of the sentence (individual grammatical forms, passages from one word-class to another), sentence-structure (word-order, negation, etc.), and the higher units into which single sentences combine (direct, indirect and free indirect speech, etc.).

At all these various levels, attention will have to be paid to a fundamental distinction: that between expressive and *evocative* devices. The latter, as already noted, derive their stylistic effect not from any inherent quality but from being associated with a particular milieu or register of style. A few examples will show how these evocative values work:

1. At the *phonological* level, such devices are a perennial source of comedy and satire. The faulty pronunciation of foreigners has been parodied in countless plays and novels; all readers of Balzac will remember Nucingen, the financier with the inimitable Alsatian brogue, who says “Hanimal edait azez” for “Animal etait assez”. More serious problems are raised when native speakers have an accent which differs from the Received Standard — a situation whose psychological and social implications form the central theme of Shaw’s *Pygmalion*. Such speakers will sometimes overcompensate their sense of linguistic insecurity by using “hypercorrect” forms; the Cockney who, for fear of “dropping his aitches”, inserts an [h] where there is no need for one, has a close parallel in the Roman Arrius, ridiculed by the poet Catullus because he would pronounce *insidias* as *hinsidias* and *Ionios* as *Hionios*, in order to impress people with his superior education. <...>

2. At the *lexical* level, there is a wide range of evocative effects: archaisms, neologisms, fashionable slogans, slang, dialect, technical terms, foreign words. <...>

3. Some examples of the manifold and intricate evocative effects in *syntax* have already been given in our discussion of inversion; we saw there how this construction, which is rare in the spoken language but frequently used in scientific and literary contexts, acquires from this very fact certain overtones which can be exploited for stylistic ends: to create an impression of solemnity, pathos or finality, and also as a vehicle of irony and parody. <...>

Before turning to the other main stream of style studies, there are two brief remarks on research methods which ought to be made:

1. In stylistics, as in certain branches of linguistics proper, there are *two alternative approaches*. In the words of Jespersen, “any linguistic phenomenon may be regarded either from without or from within, either from the outward form or from the inner meaning. In the first case we take the sound (of a word or of some other part of a linguistic expression) and then inquire into the meaning attached to it; in the second case we start from the signification and ask ourselves what formal expression it has found in the particular language we are dealing with. <...>

2. The study of stylistic resources is essentially a *descriptive* discipline since these resources, and the uses to which they are put, are synchronic phenomena which normally have nothing to do with historical antecedents. By comparing the usage of different periods, one could

trace the development of these resources, and in this way stylistics could acquire a historical dimension. This would presuppose, however, that one could recapture the stylistic overtones which linguistic elements possessed for successive generations, and this is often a difficult and hazardous task. <...>

Aids to the study of the text

1. When was semantics established as a self-contained branch of linguistics?
2. What is understood by semantic laws in historical semantics?
3. What is the significance of the numerical contrast between the number of phonemes and the number of words in English?
4. What is the essence of the statistical approach to semantics?
5. How does Stephen Ullmann understand “idiomatology”?
6. Are the terms “transparent and opaque words” synonymous to “motivated and non-motivated words”?
7. What are the distinguishing features of the associative field?
8. What is understood by the term “lexical field”?
9. Is the lexical field of kinship terms in the English language identical with that in Russian?
10. How can you account for the reluctance of structural linguists to deal with problems of meaning?
11. What are the three types of motivation found in words?
12. Why is etymological motivation relative?
13. What is meant by the mutability of motivation?
14. Why is stylistics described as a sister science but not as a branch of linguistics?
15. What evocative devices can be found at the phonological, lexical and syntactical levels?
16. What are two alternative approaches to stylistics discussed by Stephen Ullmann?

Stephen Ullmann

SEMANTIC UNIVERSALS (UNIVERSALS OF LANGUAGE)

1 Introduction

<...> I shall try in this paper to indicate certain semantic features and processes which might repay investigation on an interlinguistic scale. First, however, it will be necessary to define more closely the two terms “semantic” and “universal”. Throughout this paper, “semantic” will be

used solely with reference to *word-meaning*. It has been customary since Aristotle to regard the word as the smallest meaningful unit of speech. We now know that this is not so. The “smallest meaningful element in the utterances of a language” is the *morpheme*, not the word. The word itself is defined, in Bloomfield’s classic formula, as a “minimum free form” which may consist of one or more morphemes. It follows that semantic problems will arise not only at the word level, but also below and above it: below it at the level of bound morphemes (suffixes, prefixes, non-independent roots, etc.) and above it at the level of phrases and the higher combinations into which they enter. No problems of meaning below or above the word level will be considered in this paper; nor shall I deal with the semantics of so-called “form-words” — pronouns, articles, conjunctions, prepositions, etc. — which, though they behave like words in some respects, have a purely grammatical function and do not therefore belong to the lexical system of a language. <...>

2 Universal features in descriptive semantics

2.2 Particular and general terms

Some languages are remarkably rich in words with specific meanings, while others utilize general terms and neglect unnecessary details. French is usually regarded as a highly “abstract” language, whereas German is fond of “concrete”, particular terms. It may be noted that “concrete” and “abstract” are used in this context not in their usual senses, but as synonyms of “particular” and “general”. There are various symptoms of this contrast between the two languages:

1. In some cases, German has three or four specific verbs corresponding to one generic term in French: *gehen, reiten, fahren* — *aller*; *sehen, sitzen, liegen, hangen* — *etre*; *stellen, setzen, legen, hangen* — *mettre*. The detailed particulars expressed by the German verbs will often remain unformulated in French, or will be indicated by the context — unless of course there is a specific need to state them, in which case they will be added as supplementary information: *etre debout, aller a cheval*, etc.

2. German, as we have seen, is a highly motivated language which uses prefixes lavishly to specify every aspect of the action expressed by the verb. These subsidiary shades of meaning will normally be neglected

in French: *setzen, ansetzen* — *mettre*; *schreiben, niederschreiben* — *ecrire*; *wachsen, heranwachsen* — *grandir*. In English these nuances tend to be expressed by adverbial phrases: *to put on, to write down, to grow up*.

3. French will often use a derivative where German, and English, have a more specific compound: *cendrier* — *ashtray, Aschenbecher* <...>.

4. Outside the lexical sphere proper, there are indications of the same tendency in the German adverbial and prepositional system, such as the distinction between *herein* and *hinein*, *herunter*, and *hinunter*, etc., according to the speaker's position, and the accumulation of adverbs and prepositions to "trace the whole trajectory" of an action: "Wir segelten vom Ufer *her über* den Fluss *hin nach* der Insel *zu*." French and English would leave most of the details unexpressed.

If a sufficient number of languages were examined from this point of view, the relative frequency of particular and general terms might become a useful criterion in linguistic typology, even though it would be difficult to arrive at precise statistical conclusions in this field.

Closely connected with this feature is a problem which has exercised linguists and anthropologists for many years. It has often been asserted that the languages of "primitive" races are rich in specific and poor in generic terms. The Tasmanian aborigines, for example, had no single word for "tree", only special names for each variety of gum-tree and wattle-tree. The Zulus have no word for "cow", they must specify whether they mean a "red cow" or a "white cow", etc. Unfortunately, these reports were based only too often on inadequate evidence such as observations by early missionaries, which were uncritically accepted and reproduced by successive generations of scholars. Only as late as 1952, for example, did an American linguist explode the myth that there is no single term for "washing" in Cherokee. However, the general perpetuation of such assertions mentioned above has brought discredit on the whole theory of "prelogical mentality": at a symposium on the Sapir-Whorf hypothesis, held in Chicago in 1953, a philosopher noted that "everyone was apparently quite willing to talk about the primitiveness of a culture but most people were quite unwilling to talk about the primitiveness of language." One may wonder, however, whether there is not at least a grain of truth in the old theory. Certain facts in child psychology and in the history of our own languages seem to suggest that there is. The case of the Zulu speaker who has separate words for red and white cow is strangely similar to that of a four-year-old Dutch boy

who has special terms for a cow with red spots and one with black spots; it is true that he also possessed a general word for “cow” *tout court*, which was probably due to the influence of his mother tongue. In the same way, the alleged lack of a word for “tree” in the language of Tasmanian aborigines reminds one of the history of Latin *planta* and its modern descendants. The Latin word meant “sprout, slip, cutting”. There was in Latin no generic term for “plant” in the modern sense: *arbor* and *herba* were the most comprehensive class-concepts in the botanical field. According to a recent enquiry, the modern meaning of “plant” is first found in Albertus Magnus in the 13th century, whereas the French *plante* did not acquire this wider sense until 300 years later.

It should also be borne in mind that what may seem to us a plethora of specific terms may be due not to faulty powers of abstraction but to the influence of climate and environment. Thus it is only to be expected that the Eskimo and the Lapps should require a variety of terms to distinguish between different kinds of “snow”. Similarly, the Paiute, a desert people, speak a language which permits the most detailed description of topographical features, a necessity in a country where complex directions may be required for the location of water holes. In the words of Edward Sapir, “language is a complex inventory of all the ideas, interests, and occupations that take up the attention of the community.”

In view of the great importance of the problem to linguists and anthropologists alike, it would be most desirable to organize a large-scale research project on the whole question of relations between vocabulary and culture, with special reference to the use of particular and generic terms at different levels of civilization and in different environments. Needless to say, the results of such an enquiry would be of direct relevance to the Sapir-Whorf hypothesis and would throw valuable light on the influence of language upon thought.

4 Universal principles in the structure of the vocabulary

4.2 Lexical fields

One of the most fruitful concepts evolved so far in structural semantics is that of the “lexical field”, closely associated with Jost Trier and his school. So much has been written of late on this subject that it is

unnecessary to go into details. It will be sufficient to recall that lexical fields are highly organized and integrated conceptual spheres whose elements mutually delimit each other and derive their significance from the system as a whole. In each field a sphere of experience, concrete or abstract, is analyzed, divided up and classified in a unique way which embodies a scale of values and a peculiar vision of the world. Examples of lexical fields are: the system of colors, the network of family relations; or, among abstract experiences, the terms for intellectual qualities, ethical and aesthetic values, religious and mystical experiences.

The numerous articles and monographs which have recently been published on these problems have all tended to emphasize the differences between these fields in various languages; they have concentrated on what is distinctive and idiosyncratic in them rather than on what they have in common. Yet, beneath all the diversity, there is likely to be an underlying unity which a systematic comparison of these fields would no doubt reveal. Thus we are told of sinking differences between the number and nature of *color* distinctions: there was no single term for “brown” or “gray” in Latin; Russian has two words for “blue” — *sinij*, “dark blue” and *goluboj* “sky-blue”; the Navaho have two terms corresponding to “black”, one denoting the black of darkness, the other, the black of such objects as coal. Our “gray” and “brown”, however, correspond to a single term in their language and likewise “blue” and “green”. These differences are highly significant, but it would be equally interesting to know whether there are any elements common to all classifications of colors, any distinctions which have to be expressed everywhere and which could therefore rank as lexical constants.

The same point is even more closely noticeable in another closely organized field which has been extensively studied in various languages: the nomenclature of *kinship* terms. Take for instance the words for “brother” and “sister”. These two concepts seem so fundamental to us that we find it difficult to imagine any language that could do without them. Yet a glance at other idioms will show that they are not in any sense lexical constants. In Hungarian, there was no single term either for “brother” or for “sister” until well into the 19th century; instead, there were, and still are, two pairs of separate words for “elder” and “younger brother” and “elder” and “younger sister”. In Malay, on the other hand, there is one collective term for “sibling”, which can also mean “cousin”. In his report on structural semantics to the Oslo congress of

linguists, Professor Hjelmslev summed up the difference between the three solutions in the following diagram:

Siblings	Languages		
	Hungarian	English	Malay
“Elder brother”	Batya	Brother	—
“Younger brother”	Ocs	—	—
“Elder sister”	Nene	Sister	Saudara
“Younger sister”	Hug	—	—

The three arrangements, though very different, have one thing in common: the general relationship of “siblings” (children of the same parent or parents) is expressible in each of them, either in itself or combined with other criteria. A comparison of the same field in a number of languages would reveal whether this relationship is a semantic universal. It would also show how many ways there are of “structuring” this part of the field and how frequent these various solutions actually are. The same method could then be applied to other sections of the field. Even languages belonging to the same family and culture will sometimes show remarkable discrepancies. Thus there is no single term for “grandfather” or “grandmother” in Swedish: a distinction is made between *farfar*, the father’s father, and *morfar*, the mother’s father, and similarly between *farmor* and *mormor*. <...> In languages with a different social and cultural background, these discrepancies will be even more marked. In Dravidian, for example, there is an intricate hierarchy of kinship terms based on four sets of distinctions: sex, generation, alliance, and age, of which the third, the only non-biological one, is the most important. <...>

It may be noted in passing that the theory of lexical fields has certain affinities with the *Sapir-Whorf hypothesis*. Trier and his followers would readily agree with Whorf that each language contains a “hidden metaphysics” and that “we dissect nature along lines laid down by our native languages”. There are, however, two important differences between the two schools:

(1) lexical fields have so far been explored mainly in the best-known European languages, whereas Whorf deliberately turned away from “Standard Average European” and concentrated on totally different linguistic systems, notably the American Indian ones;

(2) the theory of lexical fields is focused on vocabulary, while Whorf's most impressive successes were obtained in the grammatical sphere. It would seem, then, that the two approaches, which have developed independently of each other, could usefully supplement one another, and the time may come when they can be combined into a unified theory.

Aids to the study of the text

1. What is understood by meaning at word level and what are other levels of meaning?
2. Why is French regarded as an abstract language?
3. What is understood as a more concrete lexical unit — a motivated or a non-motivated word?
4. How does Stephen Ullmann account for the great variety of specific terms in languages of “primitive” races?
5. What is the connection between the theory of lexical fields and the Sapir-Whorf hypothesis?
6. In what is the lexical field of kinship terms in English different from that in Swedish?

Stephen Ullmann

SEMANTICS. AN INTRODUCTION TO THE SCIENCE OF MEANING

Chapter 2. The nature of words

3 The Word as a Unit of Meaning. The Role of Context

“When *I* use a word,” said Humpty Dumpty, “it means just what *I* choose it to mean — neither more nor less.” Some linguists, in their eagerness to underline the importance of context and to demolish the belief that there is a “proper” meaning inherent in each word, go almost as far as Humpty Dumpty in their dogmatic utterances. Statements like “le mot n'est que par le contexte et n'est rien par lui-meme”, which are frequently heard nowadays, are neither accurate nor realistic. While it is perfectly true, and even a truism, that words are almost always found embedded in specific contexts, there are cases when a term stands entirely by itself, without any contextual support, and will still make sense. A one-word title such as Tolstoy's *Resurrection*, Ibsen's *Ghosts* or

Jane Austen's *Persuasion* can be heavily charged with meaning, and even such elliptical titles as Kipling's and Henry Green's *Nothing* will conjure up some sort of idea. In everyday life one is often asked: "What does word so-and-so mean?" or "How would you say word so-and-so in French?", and while in some cases it is difficult or even impossible to answer, in others one can do so without, a moment's hesitation; no one knowing French would have any difficulty, in giving the equivalent of an adjective like *yellow*, a verb like *write*, a concrete noun like *pencil*, or an abstract noun like *equality*. If words had no meaning outside contexts it would be impossible to compile a dictionary. "There is no getting away from the fact," writes an eminent semanticist, "that single words *have* more or less permanent meanings, that they actually do refer to certain referents, and not to others, and that this characteristic is the indispensable basis of all communications." This is only common sense, and it has recently been confirmed by experimental data. A series of tests designed to study the influence of context has shown that there is usually in each word a hard core of meaning which is relatively stable and can only be modified by the context within certain limits.

At the same time no one would deny the crucial importance of context in the determination of word-meanings. As far as the role of *verbal context* is concerned, this was already recognized as fundamental by some of the pioneers of modern semantics. Modern linguists, however, have not only placed greater emphasis on context but have considerably broadened its scope and have also probed more deeply into its influence on word-meanings.

The range of the term "context" has been widened in several directions. Even the strictly verbal context is no longer restricted to what immediately precedes and follows, but may cover the whole passage, and sometimes the whole book, in which the word occurs. This tendency is particularly noticeable in stylistic criticism where it has often been found that the complete significance of an important term can be grasped only in the light of the work as a whole. <...>

In addition to the verbal context, the linguist must also pay attention to the so-called *context of situation*... <...> It means in the first place the actual situation in which an utterance occurs, but leads on to an even broader view of context embracing the entire cultural background against which a speech-event has to be set. "The conception of context," writes Malinowski, "must burst the bonds of mere linguistics and be carried over into the analysis of the general conditions under which

a language is spoken... The study of any language, spoken by a people who live under conditions different from our own and possess a different culture, must be carried out in conjunction with the study of their culture and of their environment.'

This widening of contexts, linguistic and non-linguistic, has opened new horizons for the study of meaning. <...>

<...> Broadly speaking there are two kinds of contextual influences: those which affect any word, and those which affect some words more than others. Every word, no matter how precise and unambiguous, will derive from the context a certain determinateness which, by the very nature of things, can arise only in specific utterances. Even proper names, the most concrete of all words, have a variety of aspects only one of which will be relevant to a particular situation; only the context will show whether when speaking of Queen Victoria, we are referring to the young Queen advised by Lord Melbourne, to the aged, monarch reigning at the time of the Boer War, or to any other stage in the 82 years of her life. Another factor which depends largely on the context is the emotive side of word-meaning. In principle, practically any term may acquire emotive overtones in a suitable context; conversely, even words with a strong emotional charge may on occasion be employed in a purely objective manner. *Home*, for example, is one of the great emotional words of the language, and is used that way in many contexts ("Home, sweet home"; "England, home and beauty"; "*Home* is the sailor, home from the sea", etc.), but it is stripped of all emotion in *Home Office* or *B.B.C. Home Service*.

Apart from this general influence, context may also play a vital part in fixing the meaning of words which are too vague or too ambiguous to make sense by themselves. To take an extreme case, the verb *do* has such a wide variety of uses that it is virtually meaningless in itself. It is interesting to note, however, that in less advanced cases of ambiguity there is sometimes a kind of hierarchy between the various meanings, which is largely independent of context. Recent experiments have shown, for example, that when German speakers were asked to make up a sentence containing the word *Nagel*, all the subjects automatically took it in the sense of "metal nail"; apparently it did not even occur to them that it also means "finger-nail, toe-nail".

Another type of ambiguity which only the context will dispel is found in words belonging to more than one word-class. This is particu-

larly common in English where words can pass freely — by a process known as “conversion” — from one class to another. <...> Here too there is no doubt a hierarchy of functions: *fire* is primarily a noun, though it can be used as a verb; *have* is first and foremost a verb though it becomes a noun in “the *haves* and the have-nots”... The role of context is even more essential in the case of homonyms. It would obviously be meaningless to ask someone to find the equivalent of the English word *sole* in a foreign language; one would first have to specify which of the three *soles* is meant — the adjective, the fish, or the bottom of the foot — not to mention *soul* which, though spelt differently, is pronounced in the same way. The Shakespearean pun:

Not on thy *sole*, but on thy *soul*, harsh Jew,
Thou mak'st thy knife keen.

The Merchant of Venice,
Act IV, scene 1

is based on this ambiguity. <...>

Chapter 6. **Synonymy**

1 Differences between synonyms

“Words,” Dr. Johnson once remarked, “are seldom exactly synonymous.” Macaulay has expressed the same idea in terms which will commend themselves to the modern linguist: “Change the structure of the sentence; substitute one synonym for another; and the whole effect is destroyed.” In contemporary linguistics it has become almost axiomatic that complete synonymy does not exist. In the words of Bloomfield, “each linguistic form has a constant and specific meaning. If the forms are phonemically different, we suppose that their meanings are also different... We suppose, in short, that there are no actual synonyms.” Long before Bloomfield, Breal had spoken of a “law of distribution” in language, according to which “words which should be synonymous, and which were so in the past, have acquired different meanings and are no longer interchangeable.”

While there is of course a great deal of truth in these statements, it would be wrong to deny the possibility of complete synonymy. Paradoxically enough, one encounters it where one would least expect it: in

technical nomenclatures. The fact that scientific terms are precisely delimited and emotionally neutral enables us to find out quite definitely whether any two of them are completely interchangeable, and absolute synonymy is by no means infrequent. Recent studies on the formation of industrial terminologies have shown that several synonyms will sometimes arise around a new invention, until they are eventually sorted out. Such synonymy may even persist for an indefinite period. <...> In phonetics, consonants like *s* and *z* are known both as *spirants* and as *fricatives*, and the same writer may employ both terms synonymously. <...> In ordinary language, one can rarely be so positive about identity of meaning, since the matter is complicated by vagueness, ambiguity, emotive overtones and evocative effects; but even there one can occasionally find words which are for all intents and purposes interchangeable; it has been suggested, for example, that *almost* and *nearly* are such “integral” synonyms.

Nevertheless, it is perfectly true that absolute synonymy runs counter to our whole way of looking at language. When we see different words we instinctively assume that there must also be some difference in meaning, and in the vast majority of cases there is in fact a distinction even though it may be difficult to formulate. Very few words are completely synonymous in the sense of being interchangeable in any context without the slightest alteration in objective meaning, feeling-tone or evocative value. Professor W. E. Collinson has made an interesting attempt at tabulating the most typical differences between synonyms. He distinguishes between nine possibilities:

- (1) One term is more general than another: *refuse* — *reject*.
- (2) One term is more intense than another: *repudiate* — *refuse*.
- (3) One term is more emotive than another: *reject* — *decline*.
- (4) One term may imply moral approbation or censure where another is neutral: *thrifty* — *economical*.
- (5) One term is more professional than another: *decease* — *death*.
- (6) One term is more literary than another: *passing* — *death*.
- (7) One term is more colloquial than another: *turn down* — *refuse*.
- (8) One term is more local or dialectal than another: Scots *flesher* — *butcher*.
- (9) One of the synonyms belongs to child-talk: *daddy* — *father*.

Some of the above categories include several subdivisions. Under (6), literary terms may be divided into poetic, archaic and others; under (7), colloquial language comprises several varieties such as familiar, slangy and vulgar speech.

If one looks more closely at this series one notices that the nine categories fall into several distinct groups. Numbers (8) and (9) stand apart from the rest since dialect and child-talk are really outside, or at best on the fringes of, Standard English. Number (1) refers to objective differences between synonyms, number (2) combines objective and emotive factors, (3) and (4) are emotive, whereas (5), (6) and (7) involve evocative effects which, as we already know, are a special type of emotive meaning.

The best method for the *delimitation of synonyms* is the substitution test recommended by Macaulay. This, it will be remembered, is one of the fundamental procedures of modern linguistics, and in the case of synonyms it reveals at once whether, and how far, they are interchangeable. If the difference is predominantly objective, one will often find a certain overlap in meaning: the terms involved may be interchanged in some contexts but not in others. Thus, *broad* and *wide* are synonymous in some of their uses: the “*broadest* sense” of a word is the same thing as its “*widest* sense”, etc. In other contexts, only one of the two terms can be used: we say “five foot *wide*”, not *broad*; a “*broad* accent”, not — a *wide* one, etc. If, on the other hand, the difference between synonyms is mainly emotive or stylistic, there may be no overlap at all: however close in objective meaning, they belong to totally different registers or levels of style and cannot normally be interchanged. It is difficult to imagine any context — except a deliberately comical or ironical one — where *stingy* could replace *avaricious* or where *pop off* could be substituted for *pass away*.

One can also distinguish between synonyms by finding their opposites (antonyms). Thus, the verb *decline* is more or less synonymous with *reject* when it means the opposite of *accept*, but not when it is opposed to *rise*. *Deep* will overlap with *profound* in “*deep* sympathy”, where its opposite would be *superficial*, but not in “*deep* water”, where its antonym is *shallow*.

Yet another way of differentiating between synonyms is to arrange them into a series where their distinctive meanings and overtones will stand out by contrast, as for instance the various adjectives denoting swiftness: *quick*, *swift*, *fast*, *nimble*, *fleet*, *rapid*, *speedy*.

There is an amusing demonstration of differences between synonyms in *As You Like It*, Act V, scene 1, where Touchstone, the court jester, exercises his professional wit at the expense of an uneducated young peasant:

Therefore, you clown, abandon — which is in the vulgar leave — the society — which in the boorish is company — of this female — which in

the common is woman — which together is: abandon the society of this female; or, clown, thou perishest; or, to thy better understanding, diest; or, to wit, I kill thee, make thee away, translate thy life into death.

11 Synonymic patterns

The synonymic resources of a language tend to form certain characteristic and fairly consistent patterns. In English, for instance, synonyms are organized according to two basic principles, one of them involving a double, the other a triple scale.

The *double scale* — “Saxon” versus “Latin”, as it is usually called — is too well known to require detailed comment. There are in English countless pairs of synonyms where a native term is opposed to one borrowed from French, Latin or Greek. In most cases the native word is more spontaneous, more informal and unpretentious, whereas the foreign one often has a learned, abstract or even abstruse air. There may also be emotive differences: the “Saxon” term is apt to be warmer and homelier than its foreign counterpart. Phonetically too, the latter will sometimes have an alien, unassimilated appearance; it will also tend to be longer than the native word which has been subjected to the erosive effect of sound-change. There are many exceptions to this pattern; yet it recurs so persistently that it is obviously fundamental to the structure of the language. It may be noted that the term “native” need not be taken in a narrowly etymological sense: it may include words of foreign origin which have become thoroughly anglicized in form as well as in meaning, such as for instance the adjective *popish* as opposed to the learned *papal*.

It will be sufficient to quote a few examples of this synonymic pattern. All major parts of speech are involved in the process:

Parts of speech	Synonymic patterns	
Adjectives	bodily	corporeal
	brotherly	fraternal
Verbs	answer	reply
	buy	purchase
Nouns	fiddle	violin
	friendship	amity

The ease with which examples can be multiplied shows how all-pervasive this pattern is in English. <...> It is symptomatic of our instinctive reactions that, when in danger, we call for *help*, not *aid*, and that we speak of *self-help*, not *mutual aid*.

In a few cases, these synonymic values are reversed and the native term is rarer or more literary than the foreign:

dale
deed

valley
action

The explanation of the anomaly will no doubt lie in the history of the two words involved. In the case of the first pair, for example, “*valley* (from French *vallee*) is the everyday word, and *dale* (from Old English *dcel*, cognate with German *Tal*) has only lately been introduced into the standard language from the dialects of the hilly northern counties.” <...>

Side by side with this main pattern there exists in English a subsidiary one based on a *triple scale* of synonyms: native, French, and Latin or Greek:

begin (start)
end

commence
finish

initiate
conclude

In most of these combinations, the native synonym is the simplest and most ordinary of the three terms, the Latin or Greek one is learned, abstract, with an air of cold and impersonal precision, whereas the French one stands between the two extremes. <...>

Aids to the study of the text

1. Why is it often impossible to answer the question: “What does word so-and-so mean?”
2. What are the grounds for arguing that words have no meaning outside contexts?
3. What is understood by “verbal context”?
4. How can you illustrate the influence of linguistic context on word-meaning?
5. What is understood by “context of situation”?
6. What are the two kinds of contextual influences discussed by Stephen Ullmann?
7. What role does context play in determining the meaning of words formed by conversion?
8. Why is context essential in cases of homonymy?
9. What are the grounds for asserting that there can be no complete synonymy?
10. What are the most typical differences between synonyms according to W. E. Collinson?
11. What is the best method for delimitation of synonyms?
12. In what way is antonymy connected with synonymy?
13. What are the synonymic patterns observed in the English language?

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LANGUAGES IN CONTACT

Lexical Interference

Mechanisms of Lexical Interference

The ways in which one vocabulary can interfere with another are various. Given two languages, *A* and *B*, morphemes may be transferred from *A* into *B*, or *B* morphemes may be used in new designative functions on the model of *A*-morphemes with whose content they are identified; finally, in the case of compound lexical elements, both processes may be combined.

Simple Words

(1) In the case of simple (non-compound) lexical elements, the most common type of interference is the outright transfer of the phonemic sequence from one language to another. Examples of such loanwords are available from practically every language described.

Simple in this connection must be defined from the point of view of the bilinguals who perform the transfer, rather than that of the descriptive linguist. Accordingly, the category of simple words also includes compounds that are transferred in unanalyzed form. Many interjections belong in this class, e. g. Penna. German *holišmok* (< *holy smoke(s)!*) as well as whole interjectional sentences of the type of American Italian *azzoraiti* “that’s all right”, *vazzumara* “what’s the matter?” There are also the nominalized interjections, like Acadian French *faire la didouce* à “to say hello to” (< *how do you do*) or *le donquia* “carefree person” (< *don’t care*), and words of other classes: Amer. Italian *siriollo* “city hall”, *sanemagogna* “son of a gun”, Amer. Norwegian *blakkvalnot* “black walnut”, Amer. Portuguese *o fodejulai(a)* “Fourth of July”, Volga German *saditsen* “to sit down” (< Russian *saditsja*), and so on and on. Italian *pizza* “large, hot, open cheese pie (with various salty fillings)”, which has been adopted in Amer. English and “reinforced” into *pizza pie*, has even been retransferred as an unanalyzed compound into Amer. Italian: *la pizza-paia*. <...>

(2) The other major type of interference involves the extension of the use of indigenous word of the influenced language in conformity

with a foreign model. If two languages have semantemes, or units of content, which are partly similar, the interference consists in the identification and adjustment of the semantemes to fuller congruence.

In Russian, for example, the semanteme represented by the expression “*uroven*” comprises the concept of “level”, concrete and abstract. In Yakut, the semanteme represented by *tahym* was originally restricted to “water level”. Through the interference of Russian, *tahym* has been extended to represent all “levels”, whether of water or of development, skill, etc.

Often two existing semantemes, *X* and *Y* of one language are merged on the model of another language, where the combined content of *X* and *Y* is represented by a single sign, *Z*. In the process, the expression of either *X* or *Y* is utilized for the merged pair and the other is discarded. For example, in dialectal Yiddish, the semantemes “bridge” and “floor” have been merged on the model of Belorussian *most* with *brik* (originally “bridge”) expressing the combined content, and the earlier word discarded.

Since lexical interference has been particularly well studied among genetically or culturally related languages, a great many cases could be discovered where the expressions in the two languages in contact were already similar before the units of content were brought into alignment. In Colorado Spanish, for example, *ministro* “cabinet official” acquired the new meaning of “Protestant ecclesiastic” on the model of English *minister*, extending the previous similarity of expression to the content as well. Polish-Russian bilinguals are reported to broaden the use Polish *tylko* to cover all meanings of the similar Russian *tolko*, even in such phrases as *tylko wczoraj* “only yesterday” (for *dopiero wczoraj*) on the model of Russian *tolko včera*. <...>

(3) Finally, a mild type of lexical interference occurs when the expression of a sign is changed on the model of a cognate in a language in contact, without effect on the content. E. g. when Spanish *Europa* becomes *Uropa* in Tampa, Florida, or when *vakátsje* “vacation” becomes *vekejšn* in Amer. Yiddish.

Compound Words and Phrases

Three types of interference are possible for multiple lexical units consisting of more than one morpheme. All the elements may be transferred, in analyzed form; all elements may be reproduced by semantic extensions; or some elements may be transferred, while others are reproduced.

(1) Transfer of analyzed compounds occurs when the elements of a compound or phrase are adapted to word formative or syntactic patterns of the recipient language (if the elements are transferred unanalyzed, the word is to be considered simple). An example of a compound analyzed in the process of transfer is *conscientious objectors*, which Florida Spanish has borrowed as *objectors concientes*, recompounding the elements in Spanish fashion.<...>

(2) Reproduction in terms of equivalent native words can be carried out with compounds, phrases, and even larger units such as proverbs. Thus English *skyscraper* has served as a more or less exact model for German *Wolkenkratzer*, French *gratte-ciel*, Spanish *rascacielos*, Russian *neboskrjeb*, Polish *drapacz chmur*, etc.; Penna. German *es gebbt rejje* is reproduced in English as *it gives rain* “it is going to rain”, word for word. <...> This form of interference, generally called loan translation, has been subdivided as follows:

- (a) *Loan translations proper*, in which the model is reproduced exactly, element by element: Louisiana French *marchandises sèches* “dry goods” (i. e. textile fabrics for sale); Huguenot French *avoir droit* after German *recht haben*, Amer. Portuguese *estar direito* “to be right”, after English.
- (b) *Loan renditions (Lehnübertragungen)*, in which the model compound only furnishes a general hint for the reproduction, e. g. German *Vater-land* after Latin *patr-ia*, *Halb-insel* “half-island” after *paen-insula* “almost island”; *Wolkenkratzer* “cloud scraper” after *sky-scraper*.
- (c) *Loan creations (Lehnschöpfungen)*, a term applied to new coinages which are stimulated not by cultural innovations, but by the need to match designations available in a language in contact: e. g. Yiddish *mitkind* “sibling” (literally “fellow child”) created on the stimulus of English *sibling*, German *Geschwister*, and equivalent terms much in vogue in present day social science.

Among loan translations, one can also distinguish those in which the components appear with their familiar semantemes (only the particular combination of them being due to another language) from those where one or more of the components is involved in a semantic extension. An example of the first type is Florida Spanish *poner a dormir* “to put to sleep” (standard Spanish *hacer dormir*, *adormecer*), where *poner* and

dormir appear with ordinary meanings, only the combination being unusual; the second kind is exemplified by such forms as Canadian French *escalier de feu* “fire staircase, fire escape”, where *feu* appears in place of standard *incendie* (the whole compound corresponds to standard French *escalier de sauvetage*); the substandard English *yes well* modeled after Penna. German *jawell* “to be sure” or the Wisconsin German *Pferds-Rettich* “horse radish”.

(3) The third type of interference in compound lexical units involves the transfer of some elements and the reproduction of others. An excellent study has been made of such hybrid compounds in Penna. German, where forms like *fle-š-pai* “meat pie” or *esix-jug* “vinegar jug” abound, and where even the suffix *-ever* has been utilized in such hybrids as *wa(r)-ewe(r)* “whoever”, *was-ewe(r)* “whatever”. In Tampa (Fla.) Spanish, many hybrid compounds are found in baseball vocabulary, such as *home plato* “home plate”, *pelota de fly* “fly ball”, and the like. <...>

Among the hybrid compounds one may also distinguish those in which the stem is transferred and a derivative affix reproduced, e. g. Amer. Yiddish *farpojzenen* “to poison”, Swiss French patois *de-stopfe* “to unplug” (using Schwyzertütsch *š topfe*), or Penna. German *fils-ig* (after *filth-y*); *šip-ig* (after *sheep-ish*); and those in which the stem is indigenous and an affix transferred, e. g. Amer. Norwegian *karrna* “corner”, apparently a blend of English *corn-er* and Norwegian *hyrrn-a*, or German *Futter-age* “forage”, a nonce-word formed, by popular etymology, after French *four-age*. This last type might be called interlingual portmanteaus.

Finally, a special type of hybrid compound is represented by forms like Amer. Italian *canabuldogga* “bulldog”, where one element of a compound (*dog*) is both transferred and reproduced (*cana-*).

All that has been said about forms of lexical interference applies not only to common words but to proper names as well. Proper-name interference is particularly common; that the same place or person should be called by unrelated names in a language-contact situation is in fact the rarer case. Pairs of placenames like Italian *Monfalcone* — Slovene *Tržič* in Italy, Romanish *Mustér* — German *Disentis* in Switzerland, German *Wittingau* — Czech *Třebon* in the Sudeten, Polish *Tarnobrzeg* — Yiddish *Džikev* in Poland, are not common. In the most usual case a name is transferred from one language to another, e. g. Italian *Trieste* — Slovene *Trst*, Ukrainian *Vladimir* — Yiddish *Lúdmir*, German *Pfauen* — French *Faoug*. Sometimes analyzable place names are “translated”, i. e. their com-

ponents are reproduced from indigenous vocabulary, e. g. Czech *Vrch-labi* — German *Hohen-elbe*, Afrikaans *Kapstad* — English *Cape-town*, Italian *Abbazia* — Slovene *Opatija*. In the case of compounds, hybrids may result from the transfer of only one element; in the German name of the Sudeten village of *Darkendorf*, for example, the first part of the Czech name *Darkovice* was adopted, but a German final element substituted.

Similar choices are open for rendering personal names in another language: direct transfer (with phonemic adaptation, as in Norwegian *Hæve* > English *Harvey*, or without it); translations (e. g. Norwegian *Langhoug* > English *Long-hill*); and hybrids (e. g. Yiddish *Finkl-štejn* > English *Finkle-stone*). In the case of unanalysable and untranslatable names — both first and last names — a “pseudo-translation” of sorts is sometimes made, consisting of the replacement of the old name by a new one whose first consonant, at least, is the same; cf. the equivalences of Yiddish *Mojše* with English *Morris*, *Morton*; Yiddish *Herš* with *Herbert*, *Harry*; Yiddish *Rabinoviš* with *Rabbins*, and so on. A comprehensive study of the patterns of personal name changing has not yet been made, not even for a single socio-geographic area like immigrant America.

Aids to the study of the text

1. What are the types of interference characteristic of simple words?
2. What are the three types of interference possible for multiple lexical units consisting of more than one morpheme?
3. What types of loan translation are enumerated by U. Weinreich?
4. Why is proper-name interference particularly common?
5. What are the special features of proper-name interference?

Henry G. Widdowson

LINGUISTICS

Areas of enquiry: focus on meaning

Meaning in language: semantics

The study of how meaning is encoded in a language is the central business of semantics, and it is generally assumed that its main concern is with the meanings of words as lexical items. But we should note that

it is not *only* concerned with words as such. As we have seen, meaning also figures at levels of language below the word and above it. Morphemes are meaningful, for example: the derivational prefix **pre-** means “before”, so a “**pre-fix**” means “something fixed before”. “**Un-fixed**” means “not fixed”, “**re-fixed**”, “fixed again”. The inflectional morphemes are meaningful too: “**fix-ed**” signals “past” in contrast with “**fix-es**” which signals “present” (and third person subject as well). Semantics is also necessarily implicated in syntax. <...> The constituent structure *People in Oxford / ride / bikes* means something different from *People / ride / bikes / in Oxford*. Similarly, *The bishop offended the actress* and *The actress offended the bishop* are quite distinct in meaning, because word order is a syntactic device in English and so we assign subject status to the first noun phrase in each case. In both examples we have exactly the same collection of words; it is only the way they are ordered that makes them different.

The meaning of words

Facts like these have sometimes led linguists to undervalue the significance of the lexical meaning of words. It is common practice to expose the semantic indeterminacy of words in juxtaposition by citing ambiguous newspaper headlines like:

Squad help dog bite victim.
Asians settle in well.

The words alone will not do, it is argued: only grammar can sort out the ambiguity by identifying different constituent structures (“settle in / well” vs “settle / in well”, for example). And the argument is often further illustrated by quoting from Lewis Carroll’s “Jabberwocky” to show the superior semantic signalling of grammar. For example:

’Twas brillig and the slithy toves
Did gyre and gimble in the wabe.

The words, it’s claimed, are nonsense and so all we can do is identify the form classes on grammatical evidence: adjectives *brillig* and *slithy*, verbs *gyre* and *gimble*, nouns *toves* and *wabe*. So it is that whatever meaning can be gleaned from these lines must depend entirely on the grammar. But this does not seem to be so. Although these words are

not part of the normal vocabulary of English, they resemble words that are, and so we treat them as lexical items and assign them meaning accordingly. Thus, *brillig* can be said to suggest “brilliant / bright”, *slithy*, “slimy / lithe”, and *wabe*, “wave”. So for me, at least, these lines project some meaning roughly on the lines of: “It was a bright day, and reptilian creatures were frolicking in the waves”. Other people will no doubt read the lines differently, but they will do so by assigning some meaning or other to the lexical items. They will not just ignore them. Meaning may not be fully determined by lexis, but given a collection of words <...>, we can always infer *some* figment of a proposition. Grammar actually provides much less to go on. Nobody, I imagine, would make much sense of:

‘Twas adjective and the adjective nouns
did verb and verb in the noun.

So although meaning is indeed signalled, as we have seen, by the morphological and syntactic processes of word adaptation and assembly, this is far from the whole story. Obviously enough these processes need words to work on, and it is the words which provide the main semantic content which is to be selected from and shaped. The grammatical processes we have discussed can be seen as playing a supportive role whereby existing units of lexical meaning are organized, modified, and tailored to requirements. They do not initiate meaning; they act upon meaning already lexically provided.

Semantic components

What kinds of meaning, then, are encoded in the word? We can begin by referring to the same principle of constituent assembly that has served us so well so far. When considering inflectional affixes in the last chapter, it was pointed out that it is common to find two morphemes fused into one form, as in “come” + past tense = “came”. When considering derivational affixes we noted that *un-* and *re-* can combine with various lexical items to yield others like “unfix”, “undo”, “unscrew”, “refix”, “retell”, and “review”, and so on. We have already established the semantic character of these morphological forms. We can say, then, that a lexical item like “unfix” has two semantic elements or components, each given separate expression in the word form “*un* + fix”.

Now it happens that many such derived forms have semantic equivalents which are single morphemes: “unwell” = “sick”, for example, “unhappy” = “sad”. Furthermore, there are many equivalents which can take the form not of single words but of phrases where the bound morpheme separates itself from bondage and becomes free. So “unwell” = “not well”, “unhappy” = “not happy”, “reborn” = “born again”, “replant” = “plant again”, and so on. In George Orwell’s novel *1984*, this principle of decomposition provides the basis for the reformed English of Newspeak: in Newspeak, for example, “excellent” becomes “plusgood”, “bad” becomes “ungood”, “terrible” becomes “plusungood”, and so on.

Now (without commitment to the principles of Newspeak) it seems reasonable to suggest that a lexical item like “sick” is a version of “unwell”: it is just that the two morphological elements have become fused into one. It would follow that if “unwell” has two elements of meaning or *semantic components*, then so does “sick”. And if these lexical items can be said to be encodings of different semantic components, then it would also seem logical to suppose that the same can be said of all lexical items, the only difference being that such components are explicitly signalled in some cases, but not in others.

The signalling is not straightforward, however. When a free lexical form becomes bound as an affix, its meaning is not just added, but acts upon the host lexical item in various ways. Thus “careful” can be analysed as “full of care”, but “careless” does not mean “with less care” but “with *no* care”. Some affixes activate grammatical relations. The suffix **-able** for example, contracts a passive relation with its stem. So “eatable”, for example, meant not “able to eat” but “able *to be eaten*”. With **-less** and **-able**, the semantic effect of affixation is predictable. In other cases things are not so simple. The suffix **-er** derives a noun from a verb, and so denotes an actor of the action. Thus, words like “baker” and “keeper” can be taken apart and glossed as “a person who bakes” and “a person who keeps (something)”. Here the actor is a human agent. But it can also be an inanimate instrument. A “cooker” is not “a person who cooks” but “a device for cooking”, and in words like “printer”, “cleaner”, and “speaker” the suffix can denote either agent or instrument. And with words like “creeper” (meaning “plant”) and “breaker” (meaning “wave”) the original significance of the suffix has now, in part at least, disappeared.

And it is commonly the case, of course, that the distinctive meaning of the lexical host disappears and blends in with the affix in the historical process of etymological change. So it is with words like “reckless” or “feckless”, which cannot mean “with no reck” or “with no feck” since there are no such lexemes in English. Conversely, when an affix attaches itself to an existing form, it may blend with its host, and again the lexical whole is not a sum of its parts. The prefix *re-* is even more unreliable in this respect than the suffix *-er* referred to above. “Return” does not normally mean “turn again” or “recall” “call again”. When they do signal such meanings, they are generally given a hyphen in writing and marked stress in speech to indicate that the prefix retains its semantic identity. Thus, you have a “re-call” (ˈrɪ:kɔ:l) button on the telephone, but you may not “recall” (rɪˈkɔ:l) how to use it.

The general point is, then, that we can conceive of all lexical items as encodings of one or more semantic elements or components, whether these are overtly signalled or not, and in identifying them we can establish the *denotation* of words. Thus, one denotation of the verb “return” can be specified as [come + back], another as [give + back]. “Come / go” and “give / take” in turn can be said to consist of components: something along the lines of [move + self + towards / away] on the one hand, and [move + something + towards / away] on the other.

These components of meaning can be seen as analogous with segments of sound. The same principle of combination is at work. In our previous discussion, we were able to establish contrasts between phonological words by invoking minimal differences in the sequence of sound segments. Thus, “come” contrasts with “gum” with respect to the one feature of voice on the initial consonant — i. e. the sounds [k] and [g] are formed in exactly the same way, except that in [g] the vocal cords vibrate and in [k] they do not. The same principle applies here: we can establish similar minimal pairs of lexical items with respect to their semantic components. Thus, “come” contrasts with “go” in respect to the one feature of directionality: [movement + *here*] as opposed to [movement + *there*].

This approach, known as *componential analysis* thus provides an inventory of the semantic features encoded in lexical forms. It can, of course, become immensely complicated and unwieldy, and as in all analysis, as the details proliferate they can lose their point and create confusion. The essential purpose of componential analysis is to identify

certain general conceptual categories or semantic principles which find expression in the particular components. Among such categories are state, process, causality, class membership, possession, dimension, location, and, as we have seen with “come” and “go”, directionality. By invoking them, we can move on from the denotation of particular lexemes to the *sense relations* that exist between them.

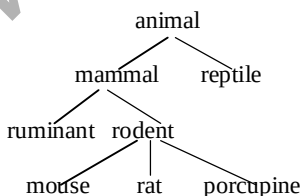
Sense relations

Consider directionality, for example. As we have seen, it provides the basis for the distinction between “come” and “go”. But it also figures in other contrasts as well, for example, “give / take”, “advance / retreat”, “arrive / depart”, “push / pull”, “send / receive”, and “buy / sell”. All of these pairs have the common feature of process, but the terms in each pair express opposite directionality, and in this respect are examples of *antonymy*. And within this group, we can distinguish a sub-set of which “give / take” and “buy / sell” are members. Here, there is a relation of reciprocal implication, known as *converseness*: “sell” necessarily implies “buy” and vice versa (if X sells a car to Y, Y necessarily buys the car from X). However, this sense relation is independent of directionality. Not only does it exist between the locational terms “above / below”, for example (if A is above B, B is necessarily below A), but also between such reciprocal roles as “parent / child”, where the sense and family relations, so to speak, coincide: “If Anne is Harry’s child, he is her parent”.

If we now consider a different semantic feature, that of dimension, we come to a meaning opposition (or antonym) of a rather different kind. Consider the adjective pairs: “big / small”, “long / short”, “thin / fat”, and “far / near”. Here, we have not absolute but relative oppositeness: not either/or but degrees of difference in respect to some norm or other. Thus, a large mouse is a small animal as compared with a small elephant — or even a very small elephant — which is a large animal. Adjectives of this kind are said to be *gradable*. They can, naturally, occur with intensifiers (for example, “very”, “extremely”) and with comparative and superlative degrees (for example, “smaller”, “smallest”). Again, as with the directional component above, this kind of antonymy is by no means restricted to lexical items with a dimensional component. “Hot / cold”, “old / new”, and “happy / unhappy” are gradable, for example. “Male / female”, and “married / unmarried”, on the other hand, are not. You can be “very happy” or “rather old” but not (normally) “rather female” or “very married”.

The examples “happy / unhappy”, and “married / unmarried” bring us to another sense relation. According to the earlier argument, these items with their explicit prefixes **un-** are equivalent in denotation to fused versions “unhappy” = “sad”, “unmarried” = “single”. With the prefixed versions, the antonymy is explicitly signalled. But there are innumerable other examples where two lexical items will contract exactly the same opposition: “buy / sell” = “purchase / sell”, “arrive / depart” = “arrive/leave”, and so on. To the extent that “buy” and “purchase”, and “depart” and “leave” are relational equivalents, they can be said to be examples of *synonymy*.

Earlier we analysed “come” as consisting of the features [move + towards]. But “move” as a semantic feature figures in the denotation of countless other lexical items as well of course. Thus, “walk” is “to move on foot”. But “walk”, too, is semantically incorporated into other words: “march”, “amble”, “stroll”, “tramp”, and “stride”, for example. “Walk”, then, is the general or *superordinate* term, and the others, the more particular instances included within it, are its subordinate terms or hyponyms. In the same way, “animal” is a superordinate term, “mouse” and “elephant” are hyponyms. But we can establish intervening levels of *hyponymy*: “mouse” is a hyponym of the superordinate “rodent” (together with the co-hyponyms “rat”, “porcupine”, etc.), while “rodent” is a hyponym of the superordinate “mammal”, which is in turn a hyponym of “animal”:



Each superordinate necessarily possesses a semantic feature common to all its hyponyms. To the extent that each co-hyponym has a distinct semantic specification, it serves as a superordinate to the next level of classification down, until all distinctive features are exhausted. It follows that where two lexical items appear in the same position on the tree as hyponyms we have synonymy. We may decide, for example, that “amble”

and “stroll” are not distinguishable as ways of walking, and so are synonyms in that they have the same hyponymic relation to the superordinate word “walk”. Notice, though, that this has to do with the equivalence of denotation as elements of the code. Synonymy as discussed here is a *semantic* relation. <...>

Aids to the study of the text

1. What is the central business of semantics?
2. Is there any connection between semantics and syntax?
3. What are semantic components?
4. How can the denotation of words be established?
5. What is the aim of componential analysis?
6. What are basic sense relations?

SEMANTIC RELATIONS IN MODERN ENGLISH LEXICON

David Alan Cruse

LEXICAL SEMANTICS

Introducing Lexical Relations

<...> Sense relations are of two fundamental types: paradigmatic and syntagmatic. [...]

Paradigmatic relations, for the most part, reflect the way infinitely and continuously varied experienced reality is apprehended and controlled through being categorised, subcategorised and graded along specific dimensions of variation. They represent systems of choices a speaker faces when encoding his message. Syntagmatic aspects of lexical meaning, on the other hand, serve discourse cohesion, adding necessary informational redundancy to the message, at the same time controlling the semantic contribution of individual utterance elements through disambiguation, for instance, or by signalling alternative — e. g. figurative — strategies of interpretation.

Congruence

The four basic relations between classes furnish a model not only for establishing a fundamental group of sense relations, but also for defining a set of systematic variants applicable to virtually all other paradigmatic sense relations. The basic lexical relations will be referred to collectively as congruence relations, and the variants as congruence variants. The relations between classes are as follows:

- (1) identity: class A and class B have the same members;
- (2) inclusion: class B is wholly included in class A;
- (3) overlap: class A and class B have members in common but each has members not found in the other;
- (4) disjunction: class A and class B have no members.

This model can be applied to the definition of a set of lexical relations in two ways. The first possibility is to adopt a referential viewpoint. For two lexical items A and B we can ask whether the respective classes of entities they denote are identical, disjunct, overlapping, or whether

one includes the other. This approach is convenient, and we shall often have recourse to it; however, it has disadvantages (even supposing that a fully adequate account can be given of such notions as “the class of dogs”). One difficulty is that the approach is not sufficiently general: many words do not in any straightforward way denote classes of potential referents (consider *air*, *some*, *usually*, *however*). There are also problems with words like *unicorn*, *roc*, *elf* and *dragon*. One would wish to say that there was a semantic relation between, say, *unicorn* and *animal*, yet the class of animals contains no unicorns. A better approach to the study of the semantic relations between two lexical items X and Y is to operate directly in terms of meaning, and look at semantic relations between parallel sentences in which X and Y occupy identical structural positions. The most useful primary lexical relations are established using truth-conditional relations between containing sentences. In appropriate cases (i. e. with items that denote classes of entities) this method gives results identical to those obtained with referential classes, but has the advantage of greater generality. Let us now consider the primary lexical relations (i. e. congruence relations) individually and in detail.

Cognitive Synonymy

The lexical relation which parallels identity in the membership of two classes is, of course, *synonymy*. There are different degrees of synonymy, the relation defined in terms of truth-conditional relations will be distinguished as cognitive synonymy. Cognitive synonymy may be defined as follows:

X is a cognitive synonym of Y if (i) X and Y are syntactically identical, and (ii) any grammatical declarative sentence S containing X has equivalent truth-conditions to another sentence S which is identical to S except that X is replaced by Y.

An example of a pair of cognitive synonyms is *fiddle* and *violin*: these are incapable of yielding sentences with different truth-conditions. For instance, *He plays the violin very well* entails and is entailed by *He plays the fiddle very well*.

Hyponymy

The lexical relation corresponding to the inclusion of one class in another is *hyponymy*. Defining hyponymy is less straightforward than defining cognitive synonymy. For reasons which will become apparent

in due course, it is necessary to restrict the type of sentence used in the definition. Ideally one would like to be able to give a general characterisation of suitable sentence types; unfortunately this is not at present possible. What we shall do instead is to restrict the definition to one selected sentence type which happens to work, namely, that represented by the schema *A is f(X)*, where *f(X)* is an indefinite expression, and represents the minimum syntactic elaboration of a lexical item X for it to function as a complement of the verb *to be*. X will be said to be a hyponym of Y (and, by the same token, Y a superordinate of X) if *A is f(X)* entails and is entailed by *A is f(Y)*:

This is a DOG unilaterally entails *This is an ANIMAL*.
That is a STALLION unilaterally entails *That is a HORSE*.
This is a SCARLET flower unilaterally entails *This is a RED flower*.
He is a man who MURDERED someone unilaterally entails *He is a man who KILLED someone*.

Even with sentences not of the form *A is f(X)* it is often the case that a sentence containing a hyponym unilaterally entails a parallel sentence which is identical in all respects except that it contains a superordinate in place of the hyponym:

John punched Bill unilaterally entails *John hit Bill*.
She wore scarlet shoes unilaterally entails *She wore red shoes*.

Conversely, unilateral entailment between two sentences differing only in respect of the lexical fillers of a particular syntactic slot is often an indication of a hyponymous relation between the lexical units. However, the many and varied exceptions to both these general tendencies render it impracticable to frame a more general definition of hyponymy along these lines. In the following sentences, for instance, the entailment (unilateral in each case) is in the “wrong” direction (i. e. from superordinate to hyponym):

It's not red entails *It's not scarlet*.
All animals are forbidden entails *All dogs are forbidden*.
I always avoid the red ones entails *I always avoid the scarlet ones*.
Without the red ones there will still be too many entails *Without the scarlet ones there will still be too many*.
If it is red, it will be rejected entails *If it is scarlet, it will be rejected*.

It is possible to formulate rules for predicting the direction of entailment in such cases. For instance, if the hyponym and superordinate fall within the scope of a negative, or a universal quantifier (e. g. *all*, *every*, *each*), or if they form part of a conditional clause or other expression of contingency, then the direction of entailment will be reversed. However, there are complications. For instance, the three factors mentioned interact with one another, so that if any two are simultaneously applicable, the entailment is in the “normal” direction, i. e. from hyponym to superordinate. In 1, *dogs* and *animals* are within the scope (“field of action”) both of the negative *not* and the universal quantifier *all*; in 2, *scarlet* and *red* are within the scope of *not*, and form part of a conditional clause; in 3, *cars* and *vehicles* are within the scope of *all*, and are part of a conditional clause:

- (1) *Not all dogs are dangerous* entails *Not all animals are dangerous*.
- (2) *If it is not scarlet, it will be rejected* entails *If it is not red it will be rejected*.
- (3) *If all cars are forbidden, I shan't go* entails *If all vehicles are forbidden, I shan't go*.

When all three factors apply, entailment is once again reversed:

- (4) *If not all vehicles are forbidden, I shall go* entails *If not all cars are forbidden, I shall go*.

(Some readers may find this last example difficult to construe. Think of it this way: if it is the case that an incomplete embargo on vehicles will result in my going, then anything that entails an incomplete embargo on vehicles will result in my going; an incomplete embargo on cars entails an incomplete embargo on vehicles, so an incomplete embargo on cars will result in my going.) These regularities follow from elementary logical principles. However, while the logical principles are straightforward, the application to natural language is not quite so straightforward, because the crucial factors — negatives, conditionality, etc. — may not be overtly expressed.

- (5) *It is important to avoid red socks* entails *It is important to avoid scarlet socks*.
- (6) *It is important to buy red socks* does not entail *It is important to buy scarlet socks*.
- (7) *Flowers are prohibited* entails *Dandelions are prohibited*.
- (8) *Flowers make an acceptable present* does not entail *Dandelions make an acceptable present*.

There are no overt elements in these sentences to explain the differences; presumably, however, 5 and 7 contain implicit universal quantification.

These are not the only problems. In another class of instances, hyponym and superordinate in parallel positions yield no entailment at all. For example, *It turned scarlet* does not entail *It turned red*, since the referent of *it* may have been some other shade of red to begin with; nor, obviously, does the reverse entailment hold. For somewhat different reasons in each case, there is not entailment between *I chose the first rose on the list* and *I chose the first flower on the list*, nor between *Mary was disappointed to receive a rose* and *Mary was disappointed to receive a flower* (perhaps she was expecting an orchid?).

Entailment can occur between sentences differing only in respect of the lexical fillers of a particular syntactic slot even when the lexical items in question are not related by hyponymy. This introduces further complications into the task of providing a principled account of the relations between hyponymy and entailment; 9 provides an example:

(9) *The boil is on John's elbow* entails *The boil is on John's arm*.

It should be clear by now that the relations between hyponymy and entailment are quite complex; however, the definition of hyponymy adopted earlier bypasses these problems, so we shall pursue them no further.

There are other diagnostic tests for hyponymy which are either discriminatory but insufficiently general, or general but insufficiently discriminatory. For instance, a hyponym is often cognitively equivalent to a paraphrase in which a superordinate is syntagmatically modified. The equivalence between *queen* and *female monarch*, and *kitten* and *young cat*, for instance, establishes *queen* as a hyponym of *monarch* and *kitten* as a hyponym of *cat*. Where such equivalences can be found, they constituted satisfactory proof of hyponymy. However, by no means all hyponyms stand in a relation of cognitive equivalence with an expression containing a superordinate. There is, for example, no possible syntagmatic modification of *animal* which would render it cognitively equivalent to *dog* (or *elephant*, *mouse*, *crocodile*...).

Hyponymously related lexical items occur normally, in the appropriate order, in expressions such as the following:

Dogs and other animals.
There's no flower more beautiful than a rose.
He likes all fruit except bananas.
She reads books all day — mostly novels.

Any attempt to frame a definition along these lines, however, would run aground because, although such a definition could be made fairly general, it would not discriminate sharply enough to provide a guarantee of hyponymy.

Compatibility

The lexical relation which corresponds to overlap between classes will be given the name *compatibility*. The defining characteristics of compatibles (lexical items related by compatibility) are two. The first is that there are no systematic entailments between sentences differing only in respect of compatibles in parallel syntactic positions. So, for instance, if X and Y are compatibles, then *A is f(X)* and *A is not f(X)* are logically independent of *A is f(Y)* and *A is not f(Y)*. This criterion on its own does not guarantee any but the most tenuous relation of sense, since, for instance, *harmless* is compatible with *heavy*, and *rare* with *round*. The second defining characteristic of compatibility guarantees a genuine relationship of sense: it is that a pair of compatibles must have a common superordinate. Compatibles, therefore, have some semantic traits in common, but differ in respect of traits that do not clash. The relationship is examined by *dog* and *pet*. They both fall under the superordinate *animal* (in sense of “creature”); and *It’s a dog* and *It’s not a dog* have no necessary links with *It’s a pet* and *It’s not a pet*. Another pair of compatibles is *husband* and *policeman*; both belong to the category of human males, and *Arthur is/is not a husband* and *Arthur is/is not a policeman* are logically independent.

Two varieties of compatibility can be distinguished: strict compatibility and contingent compatibility. X and Y are strict, compatibles if they have at least one shared hyponym or hyponymous expression which is independently characterisable. Take the case of *snake* and *poisonous creature*. *It’s a snake* entails neither *It’s a poisonous creature* nor *It’s not a poisonous creature*; likewise *It’s a poisonous creature* is logically independent of *It’s a snake*. *Snake* and *poisonous creature* are strict compatibles because *adder* and *cobra*, for instance, are hyponymous to both; furthermore, these species are independently characterisable — that is, they are not established solely on the basis of venomousness. (Adders and cobras are not, of course, necessarily venomous, only canonically so, since any individual snake may have had its venom extracted). Contingent compatibility is more common. It is exemplified by *dog* and *pet*: every dog is, in principle, a potential pet. There is no

independently characterisable subclass of dogs for which being a pet is a necessary or canonical trait (lap-dogs do not count, because they cannot be distinguished without invoking the characteristic of pet-hood); nor are there distinguishable sub-types of pet which are canonically or necessarily dogs (except, of course, lap-dogs, which do not count here, either, and for parallel reasons).

Incompatibility

The sense relation which is analogous to the relation between classes with no members in common is *incompatibility*. Two lexical items X and Y are incompatibles if a sense of the form A is $f(X)$ can be found which entails a parallel sentence on the form A is *not* $f(Y)$.

It's a cat entails *It's not a dog*.

It's a carnation entails *It's not a rose*.

John is the one who is walking entails *John is not the one who is running*.

John is near the building entails *John is not in the building*.

There are certain parallels between incompatibility and compatibility. Like “mere” compatibility, mere incompatibility is of relatively little interest: the fact that *affix* and *volcano* are incompatibles is not specially informative. However, a special significance attaches to sets of incompatibles (as well as to compatibles) which fall under a single superordinate: *animal: cat, dog, lion, elephant*, etc.

Declarative sentences identical except for different incompatible terms in parallel syntactic positions (besides those used in the test) are frequently in a contrary relationship: if *I cycled to work* is true, then *I walked to work* is false, but if *I cycled to work* is false, then *I walked to work* may be either true or false. However, the relationship between incompatibility and contrariety in natural sentences, like the relationship between hyponymy and entailment, is by no means straightforward, and the expected contrariety does not always appear. For instance, the truth of *I met Mary today* does not entail the falsity of *I met Mary yesterday*, although *yesterday* and *today* are incompatibles. However, if both are true, they obviously refer to different occasions of meeting Mary — a single occasion of meeting cannot be both yesterday and today. The contrary relation will therefore show up in a sentential context that specifies, or at least implies, that a single event is being referred to, such as *I only met Mary once, and that was today / yesterday* or (somewhat less convincingly)

It was today / yesterday that I met Mary. Another example is *I bought some apples*, which does not stand in a contrary relationship with *I bought some pears*. In this case, both sentences can be true without their necessarily referring to separate events: one may purchase apples and pears simultaneously. Contrariety will only appear here if it is specified that apples (or pears) constituted the whole of the purchase: *All I bought were some apples / pears*. Colour terms present a particular problem. Most speakers would agree, I think, that *Mary wore a red dress* and *Mary wore a blue dress* were contraries (assuming, of course, that they refer to the same occasion, and that Mary, as would be normal, wore only one dress at a time); the colour terms refer to the predominant colour of the dress, and there can be only one predominant colour. But colour terms frequently qualify only part of the object their head noun denotes; furthermore, different colour terms may typically apply to different parts, so that, for instance, *Mary's eyes are blue* and *Mary's eyes are red* are not contraries (N.B. there's no lexical ambiguity in these sentences). Clearly, to yield contrary sentences, a pair of colour terms must refer to the same area of uniform colour; but it is far from obvious how to devise linguistic contexts which will guarantee this.

Like hyponymy, incompatibility features as a typical syntagmatic relation between constituent lexical items of certain common locutions. To give one example, items in a coordinated list are typically incompatibles, and gross deviations from this lead to abnormality:

I like mangoes and bananas.
 ? I like fruit and bananas.

However, and this is another parallel with hyponymy, strict incompatibility is not necessary, so there is no basis for a definition of incompatibility along these lines. It is perfectly normal, for instance, to say *You meet all kinds of people here — students, bank managers...* even though *Arthur is a student* does not entail *Arthur is not a bank manager*.

Aids to the study of the text

1. What are two fundamental types of sense relations?
2. What do paradigmatic relations reflect?
3. What is the essence of syntagmatic relations?

4. What are four basic relations between classes?
5. What is meant by cognitive synonymy?
6. What is hyponymy?
7. Why is it more complicated to define hyponymy than cognitive synonymy?
8. How is it possible to predict the direction of entailment in case of hyponymy?
9. What is understood by the terms “compatibility” and “incompatibility”?
10. What are the defining characteristics of compatibles?
11. What are the parallels between incompatibility and compatibility?
12. In what way is incompatibility connected with hyponymy?

Howard Jackson

ANALYZING ENGLISH

Relations between words

Semantic Features

The identification of semantic features is an attempt to relate lexical items by decomposing meanings into features that recur in the meanings of several lexical items. These features tend to be universal categories of meaning, reflecting the nature of the universe in which we live. One such feature is CONCRETE (features are conventionally written with capital letters), which serves to distinguish words like *dog*, *plant* and *stone* from words like *truth*, *joy* and *ability*. The latter are often called “abstract” nouns; but in feature analysis it is usual for each feature to represent a binary choice. So the first set of words would be called +CONCRETE, and the second set –CONCRETE. Words that have the feature +concrete may be further differentiated by the feature ORGANIC, which distinguishes *dog* and *plant* from *stone* and *table*, the former being +ORGANIC and the latter –ORGANIC. Words that have the feature +ORGANIC may be further differentiated by means of the feature animate: *plant* is –ANIMATE, while *dog* is +ANIMATE. And +ANIMATE words may be further differentiated by the feature HUMAN: *dog* is –HUMAN, while *boy* is +HUMAN. The features associated with *boy* are, then, +HUMAN, +ANIMATE, +ORGANIC, +CONCRETE.

Considered like this, the features appear to be hierarchically ordered (figure 1).

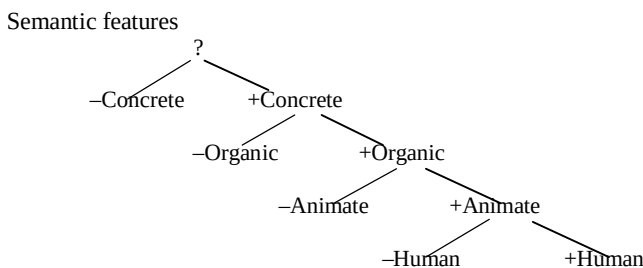


Figure 1 — Hierarchy of semantic features

This means that a feature like HUMAN includes all those above it in the hierarchy. To specify a word as having the feature +HUMAN implies that it also has the features +ANIMATE, +ORGANIC and +CONCRETE. But not all features of meaning that can be identified may be hierarchically ordered in this way. To further differentiate the meanings of words with the feature +HUMAN, e. g. *boy*, *girl*, *man*, *woman*, we need two further features: MALE and ADULT. Not only may these not be hierarchically ordered themselves, since *boy* and *girl* are –ADULT, while *girl* and *woman* are –MALE; but these features are also needed to differentiate words with the feature +ANIMATE which are –HUMAN, e. g. *mare*, *stallion*, *foal*. Incidentally, this set of words also shows that features may be marked $\pm$, since *foal* would be $\pm$ MALE.

The implication of distinctive feature analysis, as it is called, is that the whole vocabulary may be differentiated and related by means of features. In this view each lexical item would be decomposed into its distinctive semantic features in the same way that in phonology a phoneme may be decomposed into its distinctive phonetic features, e. g. [p] into bilabial voiceless and plosive. However, it is not clear that lexical items and their meanings may be totally analyzed in this way. Take the much analyzed example *bachelor*. In terms of the features so far considered *bachelor* is presumably +HUMAN, +MALE and +ADULT. We shall now require a further feature MARRIED, which will also be required for the word *spinster*, and both of these will be –MARRIED. This analysis accounts for only one sense of the word *bachelor*, i. e. that meaning “an unmarried man”; it does not, for example, account for the sense “holder of a first degree of a university”.

Our analysis for this one sense is, however, reasonably successful in terms of features: the meaning of *bachelor* is well represented by the features +HUMAN, +MALE, +ADULT, –MARRIED. But take the word *table*. In terms of the features already considered, this is presumably analyzable as +CONCRETE and –ORGANIC. Beyond this, we probably need a feature FURNITURE, and *table* will be marked as +FURNITURE. After this we begin to get stuck. Is the fact that a table has a flat surface and stands on legs of criterial significance? Or should we concentrate on its use? But many items of furniture have flat surfaces and stand on legs — cabinets, desks, cupboards, bookcases. And could we define its use precisely enough? — for eating off? for working at? And would these be universal semantic features?

Some areas of vocabulary do, however, lend themselves well to a feature type of analysis. This is particularly the case with kinship terms. To distinguish the words *mother*, *father*, *son*, *daughter*, *brother*, *sister*, *uncle*, *aunt*, *cousin*, *niece*, *nephew* the following features are needed: MALE, SAME GENERATION, ASCENDING GENERATION, COLLATERAL. <...>

Sense Relations

Another way of relating vocabulary items to each other is by means of the so-called sense relations. Meaning, it is argued, involves on the one hand the relation of reference to extralinguistic reality, and on the other relations of “sense” to other vocabulary items. Four main sense relations have been identified: synonymy, antonymy, hyponymy and incompatibility.

Synonymy and antonymy are concerned with sameness and oppositeness of meaning respectively. So *liberty* and *freedom* are said to be synonyms, while *freedom* and *captivity* could be classed as antonyms.

However, synonymy is a rather slippery notion, since whether two words are considered to be synonyms depends to a large extent on how the notion of synonymy is defined. The most rigid definition would demand the total interchangeability of words in all contexts of use. This definition would exclude the recognition of *liberty* and *freedom* as synonyms, since one can talk about the *freedom of speech* but not about the *liberty of speech*. In fact, under this kind of definition few words in the language would have synonyms. [...] If two words with approximately the same meaning occur in a language, there is a tendency to make a differentiation in usage, so that the choice between them becomes meaningful and not redundant.

But synonymy can be defined in a much looser fashion as the sameness of core or cognitive meaning. This would exclude emotive meaning, connotations and special usages from the definition. By means of such a definition many words in the vocabulary may be related to each other in terms of synonymy as Roget's *Thesaurus of English words and phrases* demonstrates. Roget also operates with the notion of antonymy; the parallel columns on the page of the Thesaurus contain lists of synonyms in a relation of antonymy.

It is possible to distinguish two kinds of antonymy. One kind is illustrated by the pair of opposites *tall* and *short*. To say that somebody is *not tall* does not necessarily imply that they are *short*, and to say that somebody is *not short* does not necessarily mean that they are *tall*. These are gradable antonyms, we can say of someone: *He is taller than Jim, but shorter than Alfred*. The other kind of antonymy is illustrated by the pair of words *buy* and *sell*. These words are said to be converses of each other: if someone buys from someone else it implies that the latter sells to the former. Further examples of converses are: *give* and *receive*, *husband* and *wife*.

Hyponymy is a paradigmatic relation between words which refers to the inclusion of the meaning of one word in that of another. It implies a superordinate and a subordinate term. For example, the meaning of *scarlet* is included within the meaning of *red*; it is said to be a hyponym of *red*. The meanings of *tulip*, *daffodil* and *rose* are included within that of *flower*; they are co-hyponyms of *flower*. The implication of hyponymy is, perhaps, that the vocabulary of a language has a hierarchical organization, with hyponyms of hyponyms of hyponyms as the meaning of the words becomes more general and more inclusive. For example, *dog* is a hyponym of *animal*, which is a hyponym of *mammal*, which is a hyponym of *creature*. But not all the words in the vocabulary of English can be considered to be ordered in this kind of hierarchy. Many words appear to have no superordinate term in which they are included, e. g. *think*, *colour*. The relation among co-hyponyms is one of incompatibility, and this relation applies also to sets of words which have no superordinate term. The colour words, for example, are incompatible: to say that something is *red* is to deny that it is *green*, *blue*, *yellow*, etc. To say that something is a *tree* is to deny that it is a *shrub*, *bush*, *plant*, etc. Incompatibility is a relation that holds between items which have a similar meaning, or which refer in the same general area of meaning.

Lexical Fields

A third attempt to relate vocabulary items in a basically paradigmatic way is by means of the notion of lexical fields, which are also sometimes called semantic fields or semantic domains, or lexical sets. A lexical field is a set of lexical items related in meaning and arrayed to display the similarities and differences between the items. <...> The implication of this approach to the study of lexical relations is that the vocabulary of a language can be divided up into a number of lexical fields, exhaustively. It is an approach that is reflected in foreign-language courses that use a situational approach, with lessons entitled “at the bank”, “at the hotel”, “buying vegetables”, etc. In fact, a language cannot be exhaustively divided up in this way, just as a culture does not show clear demarcation lines between all its parts. Linguistically, the presence of a large number of “core” words that occur in numerous lexical sets or perhaps in the social situations associated with them present problems for this kind of attempt. However, a large number of lexical fields can be identified in a language and they do present us with an interesting insight into the structure of vocabulary. Roget’s *Thesaurus* is based in part, at least implicitly, on this kind of approach.

In selecting words for inclusion in a particular lexical field, the principle of loose synonymy is applied: the words selected are related in meaning, not in the sense that they are necessarily interchangeable, but in the sense that they refer to the same area of reality or experience. The relation of hyponymy is also important, since where possible words are arranged hierarchically in a lexical field, with superordinate and subordinate terms, e. g. *cook* is a superordinate term for most of the terms in that field. In order to distinguish the terms in a lexical field the technique of feature analysis is often used. So, for the cooking terms, features like $\pm$ WATER, $\pm$ OIL, $\pm$ INSIDE OVEN would be necessary to distinguish the terms in that field.

In the lexical field of the verbs of motion features like the following will be needed: LIMBS USED, ORDER OF CONTACT WITH SURFACE, SUBSTANCE (water, air), HORIZONTAL OR VERTICAL MOTION, CONTINUOUS CONTACT, etc. These will distinguish items like: *walk, run, crawl, swim, climb, creep, ride, fly, sail, move*.

Aids to the study of the text

1. What is the essence of identification of semantic features in lexical items?
2. What is understood by sense relations? Enumerate the main types of sense relations.

3. Why is synonymy a rather slippery notion?
4. What are the kinds of antonymy?
5. How does the author understand hyponymy?
6. Can all the words in the vocabulary of English be considered to be ordered in hyponymic hierarchy? Why not?
7. What is meant by a lexical field?
8. What is the essence of the principle of loose synonymy?

Adrienne Lehrer

SEMANTIC FIELDS AND LEXICAL STRUCTURE

Semantic Fields

<...> Theories of semantic fields assume that the vocabulary of a language is structured, just as the grammar and phonology of a language are structured — the words of a language can be classified into sets which are related to conceptual fields and divide up the semantic space or the semantic domain in certain ways. The term “theory” is loosely used; perhaps “field approach” might be preferable, since most field studies are not complete enough or formalized enough to be considered coherent, unified theories.

The development of field theories stems from the work of German linguists of a half century ago and that of American anthropologists. Both groups were influenced by Humboldt (via Boas and Sapir in the latter case), and Saussure’s notion of “association” may also have been influential. Among the German linguists Trier was most important and influential. Trier distinguished between lexical and conceptual fields, whereby the lexical field divides the conceptual field into parts, like a mosaic. A word acquires its meaning by its opposition to its neighboring words in the pattern.

In applying his semantic theory, Trier investigated the field of intellect at various stages of medieval German, comparing different historical periods and the changes that took place.

Trier has been criticized for making a number of assumptions which may not be well founded — at least they are highly controversial. If, however, these assumptions are reformulated as empirical questions or

problems to be investigated, they turn out to be very interesting problems indeed. One important question is whether in fact the lexical items in any given field divide up the conceptual space like a mosaic or whether there are gaps and overlaps. I think that the examples that are presented in following chapters will show that there very definitely are gaps and overlaps, but looking closely at the semantic field, it is possible to describe the gaps and overlaps.

A more useful model for the analysis of semantic fields is that of focal points, as suggested by the work of Berlin and Kay. In their study of color terms Berlin and Kay found that speakers disagree among themselves as to where to draw the line between colors, e. g., red and orange; moreover, the judgments of a single speaker differ at various times. However, there is high agreement and great reliability when subjects are to find focal points for colors — e. g., the most typical red or the best example of yellow. This model allows for fuzzy borders among lexical items, and thus accounts better for the behavioral evidence. The study by Berlin and Kay also shows that there are some parts of a color spectrum that are not happily covered by any term or at least by any basic term.

Trier believed that linguistic fields are not isolated, but rather that they “join together to form in turn fields of higher order, until finally the entire vocabulary is included”. There certainly are connections between fields; for example, one could establish a field of occupations, one of recreations, one of learning, and then group them into another giant field of human activities. Some fields are mutually exclusive, as for instance the fields of animals and artifacts. If something belongs to the class of animals, it is not an artifact and vice versa, notwithstanding apparent counter-examples like a toy dog which is an artifact in the shape of a dog and borderline cases like stuffed moose heads. Whether or not a progressive synthesis of small fields into larger ones is semantically enlightening is an open question.

Trier distinguished between lexical and conceptual fields, though he did not always separate the two in his writing, but many scholars have pointed out that conceptual fields cannot be defined independently of language. It is not at all clear just what the relationship between language and conceptualization is. The strong version of the Whorfian hypothesis, which claims that speakers are at the mercy of their language and can never see the world in any other way, is untenable, as is the opposite view that language has no effect on our conceptualization. The study of

linguistic fields should prove to be a rich source of hypotheses about human conceptualization, and perhaps some day linguists will generally agree that the correct or at least best semantic analysis is one that describes a speaker's conceptual structure. But at this stage, the relationship between language and thought must be considered an open one.

Another criticism that can be made of Trier's field theory is that it assumes that lexical fields are closed, well-defined sets. Investigations of various semantic fields show that this objection is well founded. On the whole, the smaller and more specific the field, the more agreement there is among speakers on what words belong to the set. There is also agreement on the basic items in a field, whereas the disagreement is greater with respect to peripheral items — in fact many speakers may not be familiar with the peripheral items. For example, in the field of cooking words we have *bake*, *boil*, *fry*, etc., but *scald*, *carmelize*, *render* and *clarify* are peripheral — according to the Berlin-Kay criteria. However, an adequate semantic analysis should reveal the difference between basic and peripheral terms and attempt to characterize the indeterminacy of the domain. Since the first step in analyzing a semantic field involves selecting an inventory of items in that field, the methodological problem of obtaining a valid and reliable set of words deserves attention.

Finally, Trier has been challenged for assuming that lexical fields can be organized into neat rigid patterns based on oppositions and differences, whereas the associations of words are “looser, more complex, and more unpredictable than most field theorists are prepared to admit”.

There is evidence for the view that semantic structures can be looked at in a variety of ways. <...> Within linguistics the field theory has been developed most thoroughly and explicitly by John Lyons, although other semanticists refer to or presuppose many notions of semantic fields. Lyons gives considerable importance to the notion of context, although “context” turns out to be a fairly fluid concept, similar to Firth's notion of “restricted code”. The main point of Lyons' theory is that a lexicologist need not analyze an isolated word to account for all possible meanings and uses in all possible linguistic and nonlinguistic contexts; rather the analysis is restricted to the meaning and use of a word (and related ones) within narrow domains, as for example, a single text, the writings of a single author, a single genre, or a genre at a particular time; or the domain can be restricted by subject matter, such as looking at a set of terms as they pattern in a limited “universe of discourse”.

For example, in baseball terminology, *fly* and *run* have certain meanings, and the lexicologist need not concern himself with their meanings in other contexts. The analysis of a lexical field includes the relationship of words that contrast paradigmatically (all belonging to one part, of speech), and those of other parts of speech that are related morphologically and semantically, for example the relationship between *fly* and *wing* or *tutor*, *tutorial*, and *tuition*.

Lyons defines the meaning of a term as a function of its relationships to the other terms in the lexical field, and these relationships (synonymy, antonymy, class inclusion, etc.) are primitives in his theory. <...>

Aids to the study of the text

1. What is the essence of theories of semantic fields?
2. What term does Adrienne Lehrer approve of while discussing lexical fields?
3. Why was Trier's theory been criticized?
4. What is the main point of Lyons' theory?
5. How does Lyons define the meaning of a term?

Stephen Ullmann

SEMANTIC UNIVERSALS

Universal Features in Descriptive Semantics

Synonymy

In his *Essai de sémantique*, Michel Breal put forward a linguistic law which he called "the law of distribution": words once synonymous are subsequently differentiated in various ways and thus cease to be interchangeable. <...> Another general principle of synonymy is what might be called the "law of synonymic attraction". It has often been found that subjects prominent in the interests and activities of a community tend to attract a large number of synonyms. Some significant concentrations have for instance been discovered in Old English literature. In *Beowulf* there are 37 words for "hero" or "prince" and at least a dozen for "battle" and "fight". The same epic contains 17 expressions for "sea", to which 13 more may be added from other Old English poems. <...>

A special form of attraction is the so-called “radiation of synonyms”, which was first noticed in French slang. It was found there that when a particular word was given a transferred sense its synonyms tended to develop on parallel lines. Thus the verb *chiquer* “beat” came to be used in the meaning of “deceive”, whereupon other verbs for “beat” — *torcher*, *taper*, *estamper*, *toquer* — received the same secondary sense. Such developments are sometimes confined to two words: when the English verb *overlook* acquired the transferred meaning of “deceive”, its synonym *oversee* underwent a parallel change. It would be interesting to find out how widespread these processes are in different languages.

Polysemy

This is the name given, since Breal, to the use of the same word in two or more distinct meanings. Polysemy is in all probability a semantic universal inherent in the fundamental structure of language. The alternative to it is quite unthinkable: it would mean that we would have to store in our brains a tremendous stock of words, with separate names for any possible subject we might wish to talk about; it would also mean that there would be no metaphors and that language would thus be robbed of much of its expressiveness and flexibility. As a philosopher, W. M. Urban, rightly points out, “this double reference of verbal signs ... is a basal “differentia” of semantic meaning. The fact that a sign can intend one thing without ceasing to intend another, that, indeed, the very condition of its being an expressive sign for the second is that it is also a sign for the first, is precisely what makes language an instrument of knowing”.

The frequency of polysemy in different languages is a variable depending on a number of factors. The progress of civilization will make it necessary not only to form new words but to add fresh meanings to old ones; in Breal’s formula, the more senses a term has accumulated, the more diverse aspects of intellectual and social activity it represents.

It would be interesting to explore over a wider field the relation between polysemy and cultural progress. Meanwhile, the frequency of polysemy will also depend on purely linguistic factors. As already noted, languages where derivation and composition are sparingly used will tend to fill gaps in vocabulary by adding new meanings to existing terms. Similarly, polysemy will arise more often in generic words whose meaning varies according to context, than in specific terms whose sense is less subject to variation. The relative frequency of polysemy in various

languages may thus provide a further criterion for semantic topology, though once again it is hard to see how this feature could be exactly measured.

There is, however, another aspect of polysemy which can be more precisely quantified: its relation to word-frequency. By systematically comparing the relative frequency of various words with the number of senses in which they are used, the late G. K. Zipf arrived at an interesting conclusion which he termed “the principle of diversity of meanings”. According to Zipf, there is a “direct relationship between the number of different meanings of a word and its relative frequency of occurrences”. He even tried to find a mathematical formula for this relationship: his calculations suggested that different meanings of a word will tend to be equal to the square root, of its relative frequency (with the possible exception of the few dozen most frequent words).

Put in a different way: $m = F^{1/2}$, where m stands for the number of meanings and F for relative frequency. <...> In fact it has always been clear that some of the commonest words in a language have a great diversity of meanings: in Littré’s dictionary, nearly 40 are listed under *aller*, nearly 50 under *mettre*, and some 80 under *prendre* and *faire*.

Polysemy is a fertile source of ambiguity in language. In a limited number of cases, two major meanings of the same word are differentiated by formal means; for example <...> flexion (*brothers* — *brethren*, *hanged* — *hung* <...>); word-order (*ambassador extraordinary* — *extraordinary ambassador* [...]), spelling (*discreet* — *discrete*, *draft* — *draught* <...>), etc. In the vast majority of cases, however, the context alone will suffice to exclude all irrelevant senses. When all these safeguards break down, a conflict between two or more incompatible meanings will ensue, and this may lead to the disappearance of some of these meanings, or even to that of the word itself. In the present state of our knowledge it is impossible to say whether there are any general tendencies at work in these conflicts and in the way they are resolved. <...>

Aids to the study of the text

1. What are the three laws of synonymy?
2. What are linguistic factors accounting for the relative frequency of polysemy in various languages?
3. What is understood by the relationship between the number of different meanings of a word and its relative frequency of occurrences?
4. How are various meanings of the same word differentiated by formal means?

LEXICOGRAPHY

Bergen Evans

BUT WHAT'S A DICTIONARY FOR ?

The storm of abuse in the popular press that greeted the appearance of *Webster's Third New International Dictionary* is a curious phenomenon. Never has a scholarly work of this structure been attacked with such unbridled fury and contempt. <...> What underlies all this sound and fury? <...>

So monstrous a discrepancy in evaluation requires us to examine basic principles. Just what's a dictionary for? What does it propose to do? What does the common reader go to a dictionary to find? <...>

Before we look at basic principles, it is necessary to interpose two brief statements. The first of these is that a dictionary is concerned with words. Some dictionaries give various kinds of other useful information. Some have tables of weights and measures on the flyleaves. Some list historical events, and some, home remedies. And there's nothing wrong with their so doing. But the great increase in our vocabulary in the past three decades compels all dictionaries to make more efficient use of their space. And if something must be eliminated, it is sensible to throw out these extraneous things and stick to words. <...>

And so back to our questions: what's a dictionary for, and how, in 1962, can it best do what it ought to do? The demands are simple. The common reader turns to a dictionary for information about the spelling, pronunciation, meaning, and proper use of words. He wants to know what is current and respectable. But he wants — and has a right to — the truth, the full truth. And the full truth about any language, and especially about American English today, is that there are many areas in which certainty is impossible and simplification is misleading.

Even in so settled a matter as spelling, a dictionary cannot always be absolute. *Theater* is correct, but so is *theatre*. And so are *traveled* and *travelled*, *plow* and *plough*, *catalog* and *catalogue*, and scores of

other variants. <...>. The fact here is that there are many words in our language which may be spelled, with equal correctness, in either of two ways.

So with pronunciation. A citizen listening to his radio might notice that James B. Conant, Bernard Baruch, and Dwight D. Eisenhower pronounce *economics* as ECKuhnomyks, while A. Whitney Griswold, Adlai Stevenson, and Herbert Hoover pronounce it EEKuhnomyks. He turns to the dictionary to see which of the two pronunciations is “right” and finds that they are both acceptable.

Has he been betrayed? Has the dictionary abdicated its responsibility? Should it say that one *must* speak like the president of Harvard or like the president of Yale, like the thirty-first President of the United States or like the thirty-fourth? Surely it’s none of its business to make a choice: Because so widespread and conspicuous a use of two pronunciations among people of this elevation shows that there are two pronunciations. Their speaking establishes the fact which the dictionary must record. <...>

The average purchaser of a dictionary uses it most often, probably, to find out what a word “means”. As a reader, he wants to know what an author intended to convey. As a speaker or writer, he wants to know what a word will convey to his auditors. And this, too, is complex, subtle, and forever changing.

An illustration is furnished by an editorial in the *Washington Post* (January 17, 1962). ...The editorial charges the Third International with “pretentious and obscure verbosity” and specifically instances its definition of “so simple an object as a door”.

The definition reads:

A movable piece of firm material or a structure supported usu. along one side and swinging on pivots or hinges, sliding along a groove, rolling up and down, revolving as one of four leaves, or folding like an accordion by means of which an opening may be closed or kept open for passage into or out of a building, room, or other covered enclosure or a car, airplane, elevator, or other vehicle.

<...> The writer takes the plain, downright, man-in-the-street attitude that a door is a door and any damn fool knows that.

But if so, he has walked into one of lexicography’s biggest booby traps: the belief that the obvious is easy to define. Whereas the opposite is true. Anyone can give a fair description of the strange, the new, or the unique. It’s the commonplace, the habitual, that challenges definition. <...>

Anyone who attempts sincerely to state what the word *door* means in the United States of America today can't take refuge in a log cabin. There has been an enormous proliferation of closing and demarking devices and structures in the past twenty years <...>.

Is the entrance to a tent a door, for instance? And what of the thing that seals the exit of an airplane? Is this a door? Or what of those sheets and jets of air that are now being used, in place of old-fashioned oak and hinges, to screen entrances and exits? Are they doors? And what of those accordion-like things that set off various sections of many modern appartments? <...>

<...> I go to the Second International, which the editor, of the *Post* urges me to use in preference to the Third International. Here I find that a door is:

The movable frame or barrier of boards, or other material, usually turning on hinges or pivots or sliding, by which an entranceway into a house or apartment is closed and opened; also, a similar part of a piece of furniture, as in a cabinet or bookcase.

This is only forty-six words, but though it includes the cellar door, it excludes the barn door and the accordion-like thing.

So I go on to the Third International. I see at once that the new definition is longer. But I'm looking for accuracy, and if I must sacrifice brevity to get it, then I must. And, sure enough, in the definition which raised the *Post's* blood pressure, I find the words "folding like an accordion". The thing is a door <...>.

Aids to the study of the text

1. What encyclopedic material do American dictionaries often contain?
2. Which of the two opposing lexicographical principles, the descriptive or prescriptive, is accepted by *Webster's Third New International Dictionary*?
3. What is the difficulty in defining "simple" words? How does the *Dictionary* solve the problem?

Mitford M. Mathews

MEANINGS AND ETYMOLOGIES

<...> One of the most important things a lexicographer has to do is to record the meanings of words. He has the task of arranging these meanings in the order he thinks will be of most help to those who use his work.

Different editors solve this problem of arrangement in different ways. In the prefatory part of your dictionary you will find some indication of the plan that has been followed in arranging the meanings. In the Merriam-Webster dictionaries the meanings are arranged, as far as possible, in the order in which they arose. In those dictionaries, the first meanings given are the earliest a word is known to have had, and the more modern meanings come later.

The arrangement of meanings is difficult, no matter what plan is used. Students not instructed about this aspect of dictionaries sometimes suppose that the first meaning given for a word is the most common one, but that is not always the case. The only safe course is to examine the forematter of your dictionary to see what plan has been followed.

Many of those who consult a dictionary search through the meanings, often in haste, hoping to find the one in which they are interested or one that will satisfy their immediate need. Such a method is not to be recommended. Such flutterings about leave only a meager residue of information and interest in the mind of the searcher. The most fruitful way to approach the meanings is by way of etymologies. Many times the etymology will illuminate not only a particular meaning but all the meanings a word has, and will show the way to related words and their meanings. <...>

Clinic is from a Greek word meaning a bed, and the meanings of the word and those of its derivatives and combinations stem from this significance. <...>

Sometimes the original meaning of a word is markedly different from some of its later ones. *Scene* started out in classical Greek meaning a tent and later a booth before which actors played and into which they retired to change their costumes. As the art of acting became more elaborate, the scene of a Greek theater became the permanent structure forming the background of the stage (cf. our expression “to look behind the scene”). The extension of the meaning of the word has continued until it now means anything that lies open to view. The idea of a tent is not felt at all. <...>

Let us now look carefully at some dictionary entries in an effort to secure from them all the information they contain. We shall begin by looking closely at the entry *anecdote* in the College Edition of *Webster's New World Dictionary*.

an-ec-dote (an'ik-dot'), *n.* [Fr.; ML. *anecdota*; Gr. *anekdota*, neut. pl. of *anekdotos*, unpublished; *an-*, not + *ekdotos* < *ekdidonai*; *ek-*, out + *didonai*, to give]. 1. *pl.* originally, little-known, entertaining facts of history or biography; hence, 2. a short, entertaining account of some happening, usually personal or biographical. — **SYN.**, see **story**.

This dictionary makes etymology one of its strong features and so serves exceptionally well for our purpose. The following things about this entry are of interest:

1. The entry word, printed in boldface to give it more prominence, is divided by periods into its three syllables. This form of division not only helps out with the pronunciation of a word, but it also gives assistance to one who has to divide a word at the end of a line of writing or printing. In such cases, words should be divided with respect to their syllables.

2. Then, within curves, the word is rewritten, this time in symbols that show pronunciation. A heavy accent mark, ´ immediately follows the syllable which receives most stress, and a lighter mark indicates the syllable getting minor stress. A syllable, here *ik*, which gets no stress is followed by a hyphen.

Following the indication of pronunciation comes the abbreviation of the part of speech to which the word belongs.

3. It is well-accepted dictionary procedure to place etymologies in square brackets just after the indication of the part of speech of the word involved. <...>

To show in a simpler way what it means, let us write the etymology in a much more expanded form, making no use of the abbreviations with which it is generously provided <...>. It may make this expanded version of the etymology easier to follow if we begin at the very end of it and proceed back to its beginning <...>.

In Greek there was a verb, *didonai*, meaning “to give”. A common prefix, *ek-*, was often used before this verb and it then became *ekdidonai* “to give out”. From this expanded form of the verb, Greek formed an adjective, *ekdotos*, “given out”. In Greek it was customary to add prefix *an-* to adjectives beginning with a vowel and thus reverse or negate their meanings. So the Greeks formed *anekdotos*, “not given out”.

Greek adjectives had masculine, feminine, and neuter forms. The neuter plural of *anekdotos* was *anekdota*, “unpublished things”, that is, things not given out. Latin, during the medieval period, borrowed *anekdota* in the form *anecdota*. This Latin term passed into French, where it was spelled *anecdote*. From French the word, unchanged in form, passed into English.

<...> Anyone who considers this etymology thoughtfully may well be puzzled over the fact that *anecdote* began its career with such an odd meaning. A fuller account of the word is needed before this puzzle can be cleared up.

4. <...> The meanings are given in the order of their ages, the oldest meaning being given first. Observe how the original meaning led on to sense 2, the one which nowadays the word usually has.

5. At the very end of the entry there is a reference to *story*, for a presentation of the synonyms of *anecdote*. Dictionaries perform a useful service by distinguishing between such terms as *anecdote*, *narrative*, *tale*, *story*.

Of course, the larger a dictionary is, the more information one can obtain from it. Here is the entry *anecdote* as it appears in the current large unabridged *Webster's New International Dictionary, Second Edition*.

an'ec-dote (an'ek-dot; an'ik-), *n.* [Fr., fr. Gr. *anekdotos* not published, fr. *an-* not + *ekdotos* given out, fr. *ekdidonai* to give out, to publish, fr. *ek-* out + *didonai* to give. See DATE point of time] 1. *pl.* Literally, unpublished items; narratives of secret or private details of history; — often in book titles. *Now rare.*

2. A narrative, usually brief, of a separable incident or event of curious interest, told without malice and usually with intent to amuse or please, often biographical and characteristic of some notable person, esp. of his likable foibles.

Some modern *anecdotes* aver, he nodded in his elbow chair. *Prior.*

Syn. — See STORY.

an'ec-dote, *v. i.* To tell anecdotes. — *v. t.* To use as a subject for anecdotes. *Both rare.*

<...> Notice that the etymology here ends with a reference to the entry DATE, meaning a point of time. An inspection of the etymology given of that entry reveals that *anecdote* belongs to a group of words that are related because they all trace their ancestry, in whole or in part, back to the same IE root that is seen in the Greek verb *didonai*, meaning “to give”. Here is the list of words Webster cites as being related in the manner indicated: *anecdote*, *condone*, *dado*, *damn*, *dative*, *datum*, *die*, *n.*, *donate*, *dose*, *dower*, *edit*, *pardon*, *render*, *sacerdotal*. <...>

One of the unique and highly valuable features of the unabridged Merriam-Webster is that it often groups words basically related because they, or parts of them, go back to a common ancestor word. No other English dictionary gives so much of this kind of information. Some of the commonest words in the language have a surprisingly large number of relatives. <...>

The next dictionary in which we shall examine the word *anecdote* is the *Century* in which the entry is as follows:

anecdote (an'ek-dot), *n.* [*F. anecdote*, first in pl. *anecdotes*, *M. L. anecdota*, < *Gr. ανεχδοτα*, pl., things unpublished applied by Procopius to his memoirs of Justinian, which consisted chiefly of gossip about the private life of the court; prop. neut. pl. of *ανεχδοτοζ*, unpublished, not given out, < *Gr. av* = priv. + *εχδοτοζ*, given out, verbal adj. of *εχιδοναι*, give out, publish, < *εχ*, out (= *L. ex.*: see *ex-*), + *διδοναι*, give, = *L. dare*, give: see *dose* and *date*). **1. pl.** Secret history; facts relating to secret or private affairs, as of governments or of individuals: often used (commonly in the form *anecdota*) as the title of works treating of such matters. — **2.** A short narrative of a particular or detached incident or occurrence of an interesting nature; a biographical incident; a single passage of private life. = *Syn.*

Anecdote, Story. An *anecdote* is the relation of an interesting or amusing incident, generally of a private nature, and is always reported as true. A *story* may be true or fictitious, and generally has reference to a series of incidents so arranged and related as to be entertaining.

In this treatment of the word there are some things not observed before:

1. As is often done in dictionaries, the sign < is used freely in the sense of “from”. One instance of its use is seen in the etymology above.

2. According to the etymology given here, the form which *anecdote* had in French was the plural, a form to be expected from the words being derived from a plural in Latin and in Greek. With this information, it is easier to understand why it was in its plural form that the word made its first appearance in English. <...>

4. The remainder of the *Century* entry is easily understood with the possible exception of the abbreviation “priv.” for *privative*, a word used in grammar in connection with those prefixes which change the sense of a word from a positive to a negative one, as do *un-*, *il-*, *in-*, *ir-*, in English. (Compare such words as *lawful*, *unlawful*; *legal*, *illegal*; *tolerant*, *intolerant*; *regular*, *irregular*. <...> Greek made use of a prefix of this kind, *a-*, which might also appear as *an-*. In Greek grammar this prefix is referred to as “alpha privative”.

It may appear to the beginner that by this time we have certainly found out all there is to know about *anecdote*, but we have not. Here is how the entry looks in the *Oxford English Dictionary*.

Anecdote (æ-ekdoʊt). [*a. Fr. anecdote*, or *ad.* its source, *med. L. anecdota* (see sense 1), *a. Gr. ανεχδοτα* things unpublished, *f. an-* priv. + *ekdotos*, published, *f. ekdidonai* to give out, publish: applied by Procopius to his “Unpublished Memoirs” of the

Emperor Justinian, which consisted chiefly of tales of the private life of the court; whence the application of the name to short stories or particulars.]

1. *pl.* Secret, private, or hitherto unpublished narratives or details of history. (At first, and now again occas. used in L form *anecdota*.)

1676 MARVELL *Mr. Smirke* Wks. 1875 IV. 71 A man ... might make a pleasant story of the *anecdota* of that meeting. <...> 1727 SWIFT *Gulliver* III, viii. 230 Those who pretend to write anecdotes, or secret history. 1727—51 CHAMBERS *C vol.*, *Anecdotes*, *Anecdota*, a term used by some authors, for the titles of Secret Histories; that is, of such as relate the secret affairs and transactions of princes; speaking with too much freedom, or too much sincerity, of the manner and conduct of persons in authority, to allow of their being made public. <...>

2. The narrative of a detached incident, or of a single event, told as being in itself interesting or striking. (*At first*, An item of gossip.)

1761 YORKE in Ellis *Orig. Lett.* 11 483 IV, 429 Monsieur Coccoz will tell you all the anecdotes of London better than I can. <...> 1789 BOSWELL *Lett.* (1857) 311 It [life of Johnson] will certainly be ... full of literary and characteristic anecdotes (which word, by the way, Johnson always condemned, as used in the same sense that the French, and we from them, use it, as signifying particulars). <...> 1832 Ht. MARTINEAU *Demerara* i. 12 He told some anecdotes of Alfred's childhood. *Mod.* An after-dinner anecdote.

b. *collect.*

1828 DISRAELI *Viv. Grey* III. ii. 95 A companion who knew everything, everyone, full of wit and anecdote.

3. Comb., as *anecdote-book*, *-loving*; *anecdote-monger* a retailer of anecdotes. <...>

1. With the information already given, it is easy to understand the etymology of this entry. It should be observed that according to it, *anecdote* may not have come into English from French, but directly from medieval Latin. That this source is likely is suggested by the spelling the word has in the earliest example found of its use in English. Had it come from French *anecdotes*, it is not easy to see why Marvel in 1676 spelled it *anecdota*. Of course, it may have come into English both from French and from Latin.

2. The most noteworthy feature of this entry, and of the dictionary from which it comes, is that the definitions are followed by examples of the use of the word in the senses given. These examples all follow the same pattern. First comes the date, then the author's name in small capitals, then the title of the work cited, usually, abbreviated, followed by the number of the page. The use of illustrative quotations is a marked feature of historical dictionaries. They are given generously in the OED, there being about 1 827 306 of them in that great work.

It would be a mistake, however, to conclude that the earliest example given in the OED for a word in a particular sense is really the first

time the word occurs in print. The OED is a remarkable dictionary, but it would be much more so if those who collected material for it had been able to find the very first printed uses of all the words with which the dictionary deals. It is extremely useful to have such dates as are given, but they should not be misinterpreted.

3. Under 3 in the above entry there are given combinations into which *anecdote* has entered. The first two of these, *anecdote-book* and *anecdote-loving*, are illustrated by only one example each. Neither of the expressions appears to have been much used. The same may be said of *anecdote-monger*, which is treated slightly differently because two examples of its use were available. <...>

Aids to the study of the text

1. How do different lexicographers solve the problem of arranging the meanings of words?
2. How is one to know what plan has been followed in arranging the meanings by the dictionary he consults?
3. What does the author consider the most fruitful way to approach the meanings? How does he prove his point?
4. What information does the entry *anecdote* in the College Edition of *Webster's New World Dictionary* contain?
5. What new features are to be found in the entry *anecdote* from *Webster's New International Dictionary, Second Edition*?
6. What is of interest in the treatment of the same word by the *Century Dictionary*?
7. What are the peculiarities of the *Oxford English Dictionary* entry?

Mitford M. Mathews

THE FRESHMAN AND HIS DICTIONARY (APPLIED ENGLISH LINGUISTICS)

<...> Dictionaries are tools, and they are much more complicated and capable of many more uses than students suspect. All of us know students need encouragement and guidance in the use of dictionaries <...>. Composition books for freshmen point out the need for instruction of this kind. Despite what is being done, however, the fact is easily observable that few students are able to use their dictionaries with anything

like efficiency. Certainly there must be very few of those who come up through the grades these days who are not familiar with the details of looking up words in dictionaries, but it is one thing to find a word in a dictionary and quite another to understand fully the information there given about it. It seems to me that college freshmen are fully prepared for and could profit by a well-planned introduction to the larger of the English dictionaries, and an acquaintance with what they contain. Such a program might well include material of the following kinds. Students should know something about the large, unabridged dictionaries to which they have ready access in college. They might well be given brief sketches of the *Oxford English Dictionary*, the *English Dialect Dictionary* by Joseph Wright, the old *Century Dictionary* (12 volumes) and the modern unabridged *Webster*. These may be called the “Big Four” in the dictionary field.

An acquaintance with these larger works will not only make the student aware of what kind of information about words is available in them, but it will leave him much better prepared to make efficient use of the desk-size dictionary with which he has some familiarity. <...>

It is to be hoped that in such general instructions as may be given about the different dictionaries, some emphasis will be placed on the fact that modern dictionaries do their utmost to *record* usage, not to *prescribe* it. <...>

The attention usually devoted to instruction in the use of the dictionary apparently stresses spellings, meanings, and pronunciations somewhat in the order here given. <...>

The impression, however, inevitably conveyed by instruction restricted altogether to employing the dictionary as a problem-solver, is that such a book is of no particular use unless there is a problem requiring immediate attention. Students are sorely tempted to so manipulate things as to avoid encountering problems that drive them to a dictionary. It is to be feared that, for many of them, the dictionary is a form of medicine to be resorted to only in time of unavoidable need. It is a most helpful thing for the student to learn that dictionaries are filled with interesting information from which one can derive much pleasure and instruction, even though he may not be confronted with an urgent problem of any kind.

Students should be encouraged to develop a wholesome curiosity about words that present no particular problem in spelling, pronunciation, or meaning. As a rule, the words we know well do not rise to the surface

of our consciousness. It is only rarely that some common, everyday term forces itself upon our attention so urgently that for the first time we turn to the dictionary to see what lies back of it.

This use of the dictionary when there is no immediate, pressing need to do so, this giving attention to words we have known for a long time but have never grown curious about, is most rewarding. <...>

Aids to the study of the text

1. Why do students need encouragement and guidance in the use of dictionaries?
2. What kind of instruction does the author consider necessary for college freshmen?
3. What material might such a programme include?
4. What must be emphasized when discussing the task of lexicographers and the use of dictionaries?

Harold Whitehall

THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE ENGLISH DICTIONARY

The evolution of the English dictionary is rooted in the general evolution of the English language. In this development the chief pressures were exerted by the steady increase in the word stock of English. Such an overall increase as this made the dictionary *necessary*. The pressure of vocabulary, however, has always been influenced and reinforced by the intellectual climate of each successive period of the language.

The beginnings of dictionary history are neither national nor concerned with any of the national languages. They are concerned with the international language of medieval European civilization: Latin. Our first word books are lists of relatively difficult Latin terms, usually those of a Scriptural nature, accompanied by glosses in easier or more familiar Latin. Very early in the Anglo-Saxon period, however, we find glosses containing native English (i. e., Anglo-Saxon) equivalents for the hard Latin terms, and it may be that two of these — the *Leiden* and *Erfurt Glosses* — represent the earliest written English we possess. Such glosses, whether Latin-Latin or Latin-English, continued to be compiled during the entire Anglo-Saxon and most of the Middle-English period.

The next stage of development, attained in England around 1400, was the collection of the isolated glosses into what is called a glossarium, a kind of very early Latin-English dictionary. As it chanced, our first example of the glossarium, the so-called *Medulla Grammatica* written in East Anglia around 1400, has never been printed; but two later redactions were among our earliest printed books. <...>

The first onset of the Renaissance worked against rather than in favor of the native English dictionary. The breakdown of Latin as an international language and the rapid development of international trade led to an immediate demand for foreign-language dictionaries. The first of such works <...> was rapidly followed <...> by the best known of all such works, Florio's Italian-English dictionary (1599). Meanwhile, the first great classical dictionary, Cooper's *Thesaurus* (1565), had already appeared. <...> It should be noted, in passing, that none of these various word books of the 16th century actually used the title *dictionary* or *dictionary*. They were called by various kinds of fanciful or half-fanciful names, of which *hortus* "garden" and *thesaurus* "hoard" were particularly popular.

During the late 16th century, the full tide of the Renaissance had been sweeping a curious flotsam and jetsam into English literary harbors. Constant reading of Greek and Latin bred a race of Holofernes pedants who preferred the Latin or Greek term to the English term. Their principle in writing was to use Latino-Greek polysyllables in a Latino-English syntax. Their strange vocabulary — studded with what some critics call "inkhorn" terms — eventually affected English so powerfully that no non-Latinate Englishman could ever hope to read many works in his own language unless he was provided with explanations of elements unfamiliar to him. The *Dictionary of Hard Words*, the real predecessor of the modern dictionary, was developed to provide precisely such explanations. It is significant that the first English word book to use the name *dictionary*, Cokeram's *The English Dictionary* (1623), is subtitled *An Interpreter of Hard Words*. <...> If the 16th was the century of the foreign-language dictionary, the 17th was the century of the dictionary of hard words.

Between 1708 and 1721, hard-word dictionaries began to be replaced by word books giving ever-increasing attention to literary usage. <...>

The first word book to embody the ideals of the age was Nathaniel Bailey's *Universal Etymological Dictionary of the English Language*,

originally published in 1721 <...> This, one of the most revolutionary dictionaries ever to appear, was the first to pay proper attention to current usage, the first to feature etymology, the first to give aid in syllabification, the first to give illustrative quotations (chiefly from proverbs), the first to include illustrations, and the first to indicate pronunciation. An interleaved copy of the 1731 folio edition was the basis of Samuel Johnson's *Dictionary* of 1755; through Johnson, it influenced all subsequent lexicographical practice. The position of dictionary pioneer, commonly granted to Johnson or to Noah Webster, belongs in reality to one of the few geniuses lexicography ever produced: Nathaniel Bailey.

Johnson's *Dictionary* (1755) enormously extends the techniques developed by Bailey. Johnson was able to revise Bailey's crude etymologies <...>, to make a systematic use of illustrative quotations, to fix the spelling of many disputed words, to develop a really discriminating system of definition, and to exhibit the vocabulary of English much more fully than had ever been attempted before. <...> It (his two-volume work — *Ed.*) dominated English letters for a full century after its appearance and, after various revisions, continued in common use until 1900. As late as '90's, most Englishmen used the word *dictionary* as a mere synonym for Johnson's *Dictionary*; in 1880 a Bill was actually thrown out of Parliament because a word in it was not in "the Dictionary".

One of the tasks taken upon himself by Johnson was to remove "improprieties and absurdities" from the language. <...> The dictionaries of the second half of the 18th century extended this notion particularly to the field of pronunciation. <...> Various pronunciation experts edited a series of pronunciation dictionaries. Of these, the most important are <...> Thomas Sheridan's *General Dictionary of the English Language* (1780), and John Walker's *Critical Pronouncing Dictionary and Expositor of the English Language* (1791). <...>

If the chief contributions of the 18th century to dictionary making were (1) authoritative recording of literary vocabulary and (2) accurate recording of pronunciation, those of the 19th were unmistakably (1) the recording of word history through dated quotations and (2) the development of encyclopedic word books. Already in 1755, Samuel Johnson had hinted in his preface that the sense of a word "may easily be collected entire from the examples". During the first twenty-five years of the century the researches of R. K. Rask, J. L. C. Grimm, and F. Bopp clearly defined the historical principle in linguistics. It was only a question

of time, therefore, before someone combined Johnson's perception with the findings of the new science of historical linguistics. That person was Charles Richardson, who, in his *New Dictionary of the English Language* (1836), produced a dictionary completely lacking definitions but one in which both the senses and the historical evolution of the senses were accurately indicated by dated defining quotations. Richardson's work leads directly to the great *New English Dictionary on Historical Principles*, first organized in 1858, begun under Sir James Murray in 1888, and completed under Sir William Craigie in 1928. With its supplement (1933), the *New English Dictionary or Oxford English Dictionary* (*N.E.D.* or *O.E.D.*) covers the vocabulary of English with a completeness of historical evidence and a discrimination of senses unparalleled in linguistic history. <...>

Since the publication of the *O.E.D.*, the only important British dictionary has been Henry Cecil Wyld's *Universal Dictionary of the English Language* (1932), a work of somewhat restricted vocabulary coverage but one which may well point the way to the dictionary of the future. Wyld has discarded the older logical definitions for definitions of a more functional nature; his examples delve deeply into idiom; his etymologies are of a completeness and modernity unparalleled in any medium-sized word book. <...>

The modern American dictionary is typically a single compact volume published at a relatively modest price containing: (1) definitive American spellings; (2) pronunciation indicated by diacritical markings; (3) strictly limited etymologies; (4) numbered senses; (5) some illustrations; (6) selective treatment of synonyms and antonyms; (7) encyclopedic inclusion of scientific, technological, geographical, and biographical items. <...>

The first American dictionaries were unpretentious little school-books based chiefly on Johnson's *Dictionary* of 1755 by way of various English abridgments of that work. <...> The most famous work of this class, Noah Webster's *Compendious Dictionary of the English Language* (1806) was an enlargement of Entick's *Spelling Dictionary* (London, 1764), distinguished from its predecessors chiefly by a few encyclopedic supplements and emphasis upon its (supposed) Americanism. The book was never popular and contributed little either to Webster's own reputation or to the development of the American dictionary in general.

The first important date in American lexicography is 1828. The work that makes it important is Noah Webster's *An American Dictionary of the English Language* in two volumes. Webster's book has many deficiencies — etymologies quite untouched by the linguistic science of the time, a rudimentary pronunciation system actually inferior to that used by Walker in 1791, etc. — but in its insistence upon American spellings, in definitions keyed to the American scene, and in its illustrative quotations from the Founding Fathers of the Republic, it provided the country with the first *native* dictionary comparable in scope with that of Dr. Johnson. <...> Probably its greatest contribution to succeeding American dictionaries was the style of definition writing — writing of a clarity and pithiness never approached before its day.

The first American lexicographer to hit upon the particular pattern that distinguishes the American dictionary was Webster's lifelong rival, Joseph E. Worcester. His *Comprehensive Pronouncing and Explanation Dictionary of the English Language* (1830), actually a thoroughly revised abridgment of Webster's two-volume work of 1828, was characterized by the additions of new words, a more conservative spelling, brief, well-phrased definitions, full indication of pronunciation by means of diacritics, use of stress marks to divide syllables, and lists of synonyms. Because it was compact and low priced, it immediately became popular — far more popular, in fact, than any of Webster's own dictionaries in his own lifetime. <...>

In the field of unabridged dictionaries, the most important accretion is the *Century Dictionary* (1889), edited by the great American linguist, William Dwight Whitney, and issued in six volumes. <...> At the moment, the most important advances in lexicography are taking place in the field of the abridged collegiate-type dictionaries.

Meanwhile the scholarly dictionary has not been neglected. Once the *New English Dictionary* was published, scholarly opinion realized the need to supplement it in the various periods of English and particularly in American English. The first of the proposed supplements edited by Sir William Craigie and Professor J. R. Hulbert, is the *Dictionary of American English on Historical Principles*, completed in 1944. This was followed by a *Dictionary of Americanisms*, edited by Mitford M. Mathews and published in 1951. A *Middle English Dictionary*, a *Dictionary of the Older Scottish Tongue*, and a *Dictionary of Later Scottish* are in preparation, and work on the *American Dialect Dictionary* of the American Dialect Society is now finally under way.

Aids to the study of the text

1. What is the beginning of dictionary history connected with?
2. Note the names by which earlier word-books were called.
3. What is meant by a glossarium? When did the first works of this kind appear?
4. What historical conditions produced foreign-language dictionaries and hard word dictionaries?
5. What are the chief contributions of the 18th and 19th centuries to dictionary-making?
6. To whom does the author attach the position of dictionary pioneer?
7. What other outstanding names does the history of English dictionary-making know?
8. When and how did the concept of the legislative function of dictionaries originate?
9. What information does the author give about the history and merits of the *New English Dictionary*?
10. What makes Wyld's dictionary the only important British dictionary since the publication of the *N.E.D.*?
11. What features distinguish the typical modern American dictionary?
12. What does the article tell us about the contribution of Noah Webster and J. Worcester to American lexicography?
13. What supplements to the *N.E.D.* have been published and are now in preparation?

Ю. Д. Апресян

ЛЕКСИКОГРАФИЧЕСКАЯ КОНЦЕПЦИЯ НОВОГО БОЛЬШОГО АНГЛО-РУССКОГО СЛОВАРЯ

1 Лексикография сегодня

Отличительная черта всей современной лексикографии — синтез филологии и культуры в широком смысле слова. Значительная часть культуры любого народа реализуется через его язык, а язык во всем его богатстве закрепляется прежде всего в словаре.

Осознание особой роли языка как проводника культуры и одновременно ключа к ней привело к беспрецедентному всплеску лексикографической активности в послевоенной Европе и Америке. Первой на этот путь стала Франция. Она поставила перед собой цель возродить свой былой статус мировой культурной державы через распространение в мире словарей французского языка. Вскоре за ней последовали США и Англия. Аналогичные движения стали возникать и в других странах. Предложение породило невиданный

спрос на лексикографическую продукцию, которая вошла в быт миллионов людей. По данным Р. Илсона, в 90% английских семей есть по крайней мере один толковый словарь, не говоря о двуязычных и специальных. Словари стали популярнее поваренных книг (70%) и даже Библии (80%),

Характерные внешние черты этих новых лексикографических движений — множественность их центров, разнообразие выпускаемых ими словарей, расширение теоретической и исследовательской работы в области лексикографии, придание словарному делу индустриального размаха, его перевод на современную вычислительную технику. Все эти движения разворачивают свою деятельность под лозунгами «больше, быстрее, лучше, интереснее, привлекательней». Для этого на серьезной научной основе — с помощью широчайших массовых опросов с последующей компьютерной обработкой данных — проводится изучение рыночной конъюнктуры и нужд потребителей. Выясняется, для каких целей они пользуются тем или иным словарем, какую информацию из него извлекают, какую информацию считают излишней, какой информацией пользоваться не умеют, и, следовательно, должны быть соответствующим образом обучены и т. п.

В компьютерном деле принято говорить о различных «линиях» вычислительных машин. Можно перенести эту терминологию на словарное дело и попытаться охарактеризовать множественность центров и направлений лексикографической активности через «линии» словарей (в английской лексикографии они иногда называются семействами). Наиболее известные линии — Webster, Random House, Barnhart, American Heritage (США); Oxford, Chambers, Collins, Hamlyn, Longman (Великобритания); Larousse, Littré, Robert, Tresor (Франция); Duden (Германия); Академическая (СССР); MacQuari (Австралия); и некоторые другие. Каждая такая линия обычно представлена несколькими сериями словарей — толковых (в том числе учебных), фразеологических, исторических, региональных, синонимических, идеографических и т. п. Словари одного жанра, например, толковые, могут отличаться друг от друга по функциям (для чтения, для перевода, для устного общения, для изучения языка иностранцами), по специальному или профессиональному статусу адресатов (ср. словари для бизнесменов и журналистов — The Penguin Dictionary of Commerce, Penguin, 1963 и Glossaire de l'anglais du journalisme,

Bruxelles, 1968), по территориальной ориентации (ср. Dictionnaire du français fondamental pour l'Afrique, Didier, 1974, делающий особый упор на тот языковой материал, который может понадобиться при общении на французском языке в Африке), по возрастному статусу адресатов (для детей, для школьников, для студентов) <...>

Теоретическую деятельность в области современной лексикографии охватить в коротком введении невозможно. Поэтому попытаемся создать скорее импрессионистическое представление о ней, бегло назвав основные журналы, сборники, монографии и библиографии, опубликованные в течение одного года — с октября 1988 по сентябрь 1989.

За этот период вышло свыше 10 номеров лексикографических журналов (International Journal of Lexicography, Lexique, Lexicographic Dictionaries, Carriers de lexicologie, Советская лексикография и др.). Выпуклое представление о степени детальности обсуждения лексикографических проблем дает 9 том Lexique, целиком посвященный анализу стилистических помет во французских словарях XVII–XVIII веков.

Появилось почти столько же сборников и монографий. Мы упомянем две книги, хорошо отражающие стиль современной лексикографии. Первая из них (Х. Эрнандеса) посвящена двуязычным учебным словарям испанского языка. Оказывается, этих узко ориентированных словарей достаточно много, чтобы составить предмет монографического исследования. Вторая (М. Рипфель) посвящена анализу 736 рецензий в ученых изданиях и прессе на пять одноязычных немецких словарей. Выделяя прессу, мы хотим подчеркнуть, какой общественный резонанс вызывает публикация нового словаря.

На протяжении того же года вышло по крайней мере четыре крупных библиографии. Из них поименного упоминания в данном контексте заслуживают две: L. Zgusta. Lexicography Today. An Annotated Bibliography of the Theory of Lexicography (1988) и Eine Kommentierte Bibliographie der Wörter Buchbibliographien, 1728—1988 (1989). В первой учтено и проаннотировано свыше 5000 названий, в основном за 70-е и 80-е годы. Вторая книга является метабиблиографией библиографий, опубликованных на протяжении 260 лет, и содержит обширные сведения о них, начиная с числа обработанных языков и названий и кончая оценкой содержания и качества комментария.

Осознание культурной и политической роли словарей, расширение издательской деятельности в области лексикографии, подведение под нее мощной вычислительной базы привели к тому, что она превратилась в прибыльную отрасль народного хозяйства, чутко реагирующую на конъюнктуру рынка.

Однако для нас в данном контексте существенно другое. Вкладывая в лексикографию большие средства, частные фирмы или государство в целом не обязательно преследуют только коммерческие или рекламные цели. Во многих случаях речь идет о решении чисто культурных задач, к которым в первую очередь относится задача составления исторических словарей. Уже вышли многотомные исторические словари датского языка, британского и американского вариантов английского языка, выходят исторические словари древнееврейского, исландского, испанского, латинского, немецкого, французского, шведского, шотландского и других языков. Любопытно, что исторические словари английского языка составляются не только в Великобритании и США, но и в других странах, на других континентах. В Южной Африке, например, в 1983 г. вышел *A Dictionary of South African English on Historical Principles*, насчитывающий свыше 20 000 слов (этимология, произношение, варианты форм, дата первого появления, стилистические пометы, значение, иллюстрации, ссылки на другие словари). Несколько позднее аналогичная работа началась в Австралии, где в январе 1988 г., в ознаменование двухсотлетия страны, был создан Центр австралийского английского языка при Национальном Университете в Канберре. В конце 1988 этот центр уже выпустил *The Australian National Dictionary*, насчитывающий 10 000 единиц — слов и значений, вошедших в английский язык на территории Австралии. В это число включены и 400 слов, которые, по данным Р: Диксона, были заимствованы в австралийский английский из языков аборигенов. Словарь задуман был как дополнение к Большому Оксфордскому словарю и является, следовательно, историческим: в частности, в нем фиксируется первое датированное появление нового слова или значения.

В связи с историческими словарями нельзя не упомянуть большую работу по исторической лексикографии, развернувшуюся в нашей стране. Мы имеем в виду такие издания, как *Словарь древнерусского языка XI—XIV вв.* (под редакцией Р. И. Аванесова); *Словарь русского языка XI—XVII вв.* (под редакцией С. Г. Бархударова

и Г. А. Богатовой); Словарь русского языка XVIIIв. (под редакцией Ю. С. Сорокина).

Даже такая не слишком процветающая страна, как Польша, посчитала возможным субсидировать работу над, по-видимому, самым большим в мире филологическим словарем — Словарем польского языка XVIв. (под редакцией М. Р. Майеновой). Этот век был выбран как время наивысшего взлета польской культуры — литературы, искусства и языка. Словарь составляется на основе сплошного обследования всех польских текстов XVI века. Каждая словарная статья начинается с подробной схемы значений («путеводителя») и содержит информацию о грамматических формах и их частотности, значениях, жанровых особенностях и особенностях употребления (периферийность, эллиптичность и т. п.), синтаксических конструкциях, сочетаемости, устойчивых выражениях, этимологии. Все эти свойства описываются и иллюстрируются с исчерпывающей полнотой, так что словарные статьи «больших» слов (*дорога, другой, дух, душа* и т. п.) занимают от 20 до 30 крупноформатных страниц. Уже вышло около 20 томов этого уникального издания.

Много внимания уделяется и созданию оптимальных условий для работы лексикографа. Все большее число полумеханических операций, связанных со сбором и первоначальной систематизацией исходного лексикографического материала передается машине. В Институте русского языка РАН с начала 80-х годов осуществляется программа формирования машинных фондов, предназначенных в первую очередь для проведения разного рода лексикографических работ. В машинную форму переводятся картотеки, диалектологические карты, разнообразные тексты, материалы академических словарей и грамматик, составляются компьютерные конкордансы к произведениям ряда авторов и т. п. В Австралии, в словарном центре университета MacQuarie в Сиднее, созданы три крупных базы данных картотечного типа — корпус словаря, корпус цитат и корпус текстов австралийских писателей. Все семейства словарей MacQuarie — толковые, учебные, детские, идеографические и т. д. (всего около 15 книг готовятся на компьютере).

Во многих странах создаются не просто компьютерные картотеки, а базы данных высокого уровня, позволяющие получить ответы на запросы по десяткам интересующих составителя словаря параметров. Например, в базе данных COBUILD (Collins Birmingham

University International Language Database) можно получить такую нетривиальную информацию о типичных метонимиях и семантической структуре английских многозначных слов.

С переносом на магнитные носители целых словарей такой лексикографический сервис получил дальнейшее естественное развитие. В 1988 году было завершено новое 20-томное издание Большого Оксфордского словаря (The Oxford English Dictionary on Historical Principles). Представление о степени удобств работы с машинным корпусом этого словаря даст следующий пример. Поиск по запросу “указать словарные статьи, в этимологической зоне которых цитируются древние верхненемецкие параллели, а первые примеры датируются 1230—1251 годами” продолжается на половине словаря (10 томов с А по N) пять минут и завершается выдачей 570 словарных статей.

Однако все эти внешние проявления расцвета лексикографии интересны лишь постольку, поскольку они позволяют реформировать словарное дело по существу, и такая внутренняя реформа лексикографии действительно происходит. Ее первопричиной является та попытка синтеза филологии и культуры, о которой шла речь в начале этого раздела, а результатом — проявление некоего единства во все растущем разнообразии словарей. При этом отличительной чертой современной академической лексикографии является то, что импульс к обновлению она все чаще получает от более гибкой, быстрее реагирующей на культурные запросы учебной лексикографии.

К числу наиболее заметных общих черт большинства новых словарей и многих продолжающихся линий (Вебстер, Оксфорд, Лонгман, Робер, Ларусс, Дуден и др.) можно отнести:

- стремление добиться такой полноты характеристики слова, которая позволяет не только понять его в заданном контексте, но и правильно употребить в собственной речи. Тем самым осуществляется переход к словарям активного типа. В английской лексикографии они называются словарями для общения (понимания и говорения) или продуктивными, во французской — двусторонними (*reciproques*), или кодирующими (*de codage*), а в немецкой — словарями для письменной речи (*Schreibwörterbücher*);

- стремление преодолеть традиционную оторванность словарного описания языка от его общелингвистического, в частности,

грамматического описания, сказывающееся прежде всего в учебных словарях;

- стремление преодолеть традиционную оторванность всей лексикографии от теоретической лингвистики вообще и от семантики в особенности, тоже более всего заметное в учебных словарях;

- переход от чисто филологического описания слова к цельному филологическому и культурному описанию слова-вещи, слова-понятия, с привлечением элементов энциклопедического и этнолингвистического знания (проект Н. И. Толстого у нас, проект Е. Бартминьского в Польше);

- обогащение источников лексикографического материала за счет включения в него данных лингвистического эксперимента, с одной стороны, машинных баз данных, с другой;

- обновление лексикографических приемов и средств, введение остенсивных (картиночных) определений, путеводителей (оглавлений) по словарной статье, перекрестных ссылок (особенно в серии Robert), оценок корректности использования того или иного слова в разных ситуациях на основании мнений представительной «языковой коллегии» или «языкового суда присяжных» (так называемой *usage panel*, реализующей известный принцип Французской Академии; в американской лексикографии он широко использовался при составлении *The American Heritage Dictionary of the English Language*, материал которого апробировался, часто с процентными оценками приемлемости, коллегией из ста членов — признанных носителей образцового английского языка).

Конечно, все сказанное выше касается в первую очередь толковых словарей. Двухязычные словари обычно преследуют чисто практические цели, и новый БАРС, разумеется, не должен уклоняться от решения практических задач. С другой стороны, словарь такого класса, как НБАРС, безусловно, должен отражать хотя бы некоторые фундаментальные тенденции развития современной английской и всей мировой лексикографии. Воплотить их в естественной форме можно только на основе продуманной лексикографической теории, которая способна обеспечить и существенное расширение арсенала лексикографических услуг, и большее удобство в пользовании словарем. Как известно, нет ничего практичнее хорошей теории.

Попытка реализовать эту общую установку на совмещение практической пользы с научностью сопряжена с необходимостью

найти удовлетворительное решение ряда типичных для словарного дела антиномий, порождаемых всем ходом современного лексикографического процесса и, в частности, теми тенденциями развития лексикографии, которые были названы выше. Их можно сформулировать следующим образом:

- статичность словаря vs. динамичность языка;
- словарь как справочник vs. словарь как учебное пособие;
- словарь vs. грамматика;
- лексикографический портрет vs. лексикографический тип.

Обзор этих антиномий создает естественную основу для изложения лексикографической концепции НБАРСа. Каждая из них разбирается на материале, иллюстрирующем какую-то вполне конкретную лексикографическую проблему и общий принцип ее решения.

2 Статичность словаря и динамичность языка

Словарь — это моментальный снимок вечно обновляющегося и находящегося в постоянном движении языка. Как добиться того, чтобы этот снимок все же давал неискаженное представление о действительности?

Для словаря общего назначения ответ на этот вопрос мы находим в принципе, который условно можно назвать принципом пропорциональной фокусировки. Коротко говоря, он состоит в следующем. Все единицы словаря устроены таким образом, что в них можно обнаружить ядро и несколько слоев все более далекой периферии. Это верно для всех элементов и частей словаря, начиная с отдельного лексического значения слова или отдельного слова и кончая классом слов или словарем в целом. Если представить себе мощный луч света, сфокусированный прямо на центре любой такой области, то ярче всего он будет освещать именно центр. Все находящиеся там объекты будут различимы до мельчайших деталей. По мере удаления от центра число освещенных объектов, равно как и интенсивность их освещения будет падать, а на самой дальней периферии все погрузится в темноту. Умение пропорционально, плавно уменьшать освещенность при переходе от центра каждой лексической единицы и любых частей словаря к их периферии и составляет

основной принцип лексикографической работы. Он позволяет сделать минимально искаженный моментальный снимок текущего состояния словаря.

Отношения центра и периферии с некоторым огрублением можно определить как отношения между различными типами языковых систем. Ядро лексики составляет основу литературного языка. Но литературный язык намного уже национального. В последний входят некоторые другие языковые системы — диалекты, специальные языки науки и техники, профессиональные аргы и жаргоны определенных социальных групп. Представление об объеме их словарей могут дать две цифры. В конце 70-х годов язык энтомологии насчитывал 300 000 терминов, а язык химии — свыше миллиона. Элементы этих систем ближе всего соприкасающиеся с литературным языком как раз и составляют периферийную лексику:

Центральность — периферийность можно рассматривать относительно нескольких шкал, или измерений. Главные из них — время, пространство, употребительность, степень сложности (производности), степень стилистической маркированности. При этом ядро лексики едино и неизменно для всех шкал.

На шкале времени вокруг ядра словаря располагаются архаизмы, устаревающие и устаревшие слова, историзмы, старинные слова; ср., например, названия старинных музыкальных инструментов типа *psaltery* «гусли», *clavichord* «клавикорды». В самое последнее время к этим четырем давно признанным категориям прибавилась еще одна — несовременные слова. Это — слова, которые перестали употребляться лет 10—20 назад в результате чисто лингвистических нововведений. Реалия, в сущности, остается, меняется только ее наименование. Такова, например, буквенная классификация фильмов по аудиториям, которым они адресованы. Буква А в этой классификации не так давно обозначала кинофильмы, на которые дети и подростки допускались только в сопровождении взрослых. Сейчас действует другая классификация фильмов, Денежное пособие для многодетных семей 15—20 лет назад называлось *family allowance*. Позднее этот вид материальной помощи был переименован в *child benefit*. Считать, что *A-films*, *family allowance* и другие подобные обозначения устарели, нельзя. При любом разумном понимании современного английского языка (язык XX века, язык второй половины XX века) они в него входят. Однако совсем не фиксировать

их места на оси времени тоже нельзя, потому что тогда от читателя будет скрыт факт их анахроничности.

По другую сторону от нулевой отметки шкалы времени располагаются неологизмы. В массовых масштабах они возникают в результате научного, технического или культурного прогресса, т. е. в достаточно специальных областях. Мера их вхождения в общелитературный язык определяется степенью внедренности соответствующих идей, понятий, приборов или методов в повседневную жизнь. Достаточно вспомнить в этой связи такие далекие друг от друга, но одинаково популярные области, как психология (включая психоанализ) и вычислительная техника, «выбросившие» в общедоступный язык за последние четверть века большое число неологизмов. Показательно в этом отношении возрастание доли психологических терминов в словарях общего назначения на протяжении последних 20—25 лет. Так, в словаре Н. С. Wyld'a The Universal Dictionary of the English Language (издание 1957 года) насчитывается 23 слова, начинающихся с элемента *psycho-* «психо-», при общем объеме словника в 90—100 тыс. единиц. Любопытно, что в «Дополнениях» к Webster's Third New International Dictionary of the English Language (Merriam-Webster INC, Springfield, 1981), вышедших в 1980 г. отдельной тетрадкой, при словнике около 7 000 единиц, число терминов, начинающихся с элемента *psycho-*, почти такое же — 19. В словаре The American Heritage Dictionary of the English Language (1981), по объему словника приблизительно равном словарю Н. С. Wyld'a, но изданном на 24 года позже, их число возрастает до 50. Наконец, в двухтомном словаре Bamhart'ов The World Book Dictionary (1984) таких слов насчитывается 140. Правда, последний словарь превышает по объему первые два приблизительно на одну треть и в целом более энциклопедичен. Однако даже с этими поправками нельзя не признать, что лексикографическая оценка веса психологических и психоаналитических терминов в общем словарном составе английского языка существенно изменилась.

На шкале пространства вокруг ядра словаря располагаются прежде всего диалектизмы. В двуязычном словаре, в равной мере ориентированном на оба главных варианта английского языка, учету и фильтрации подлежат и диалектизмы Великобритании, и диалектизмы США.

Огромный ареал английского языка порождает еще одну проблему — «полинациональности» некогда единого языка. Помимо

английского она актуальна еще для нескольких языков — испанского (Испания и Латинская Америка), немецкого (Германия, Австрия, Швейцария). В частности, применительно к английскому языку исследователи отмечают, что по крайней мере на территории Южной Африки и Австралии (не говоря уже о Великобритании и США) возникают языковые особенности, формирующие не только диалектное своеобразие, но и своеобразие национальных вариантов литературного английского языка. Граждане этих стран ревниво относятся к тому, что они считают своим национальным словесным достоянием или своим национальным вкладом в общую копилку литературного языка. Это видно хотя бы из того перечня южноафриканских и австралийских словарей, который был приведен в первом разделе.

Тем самым в лексикографический оборот вводится новый лексический материал, который тоже требует внимания со стороны составителей любых английских словарей. Любопытно, например, что английскому языку Южной Африки человечество обязано словом *concentration camp* (так назывались лагеря для мирного буржуазного населения во время англо-бурской войны 1899—1902 гг.); что *tiger* в южноафриканском варианте обозначает леопарда; что глагол *perform* в Австралии приобрел значение «скандалить»; что *migrant* в австралийском английском языке обозначает иммигранта, а не мигранта, причем так называют преимущественно австралийских иммигрантов, сохраняя для всех остальных (американских, израильских и т. д.) слово *immigrant*. Иногда такие различия касаются весьма тонких элементов смысла. Американец может сказать своему приятелю *You should bring a bottle of wine to the party*, даже если он сам не собирается там быть. Иными словами, он может смотреть на принос чего-либо глазами другого наблюдателя, отличного от говорящего. В устах австралийца такая форма будет непременно значить, что он сам собирается быть на вечере.

Отметим, наконец, последнюю особенность пространственного измерения применительно к английскому языку. Бытуя на различных территориях, он впитывает в себя элементы субстрата или соседних языков. Отсюда обилие на периферии английского языка галлицизмов, испанизмов, итальянизмов, германизмов, заимствований из различных языков Индии. Вспомним хотя бы такие хорошо известные и в русском слова, как *curry* «карри» из тамильского *kari* «соус», и *sari* «сари», из хинду *sari* «одежда».

Следующая важная шкала — это шкала употребительности. Ее следует рассмотреть в двух аспектах — чисто лингвистическом и общекультурном.

Лингвисты выделяют в языке систему (естественную норму) и узус. В систему входит все, что может быть образовано по правилам данного языка. Узус — это то, что узаконено каждодневной языковой практикой говорящих.

Ясно, что в подавляющем большинстве случаев система и узус совпадают: то, что может быть выведено по правилам системы, как раз и является наиболее употребительным в языковой практике и составляет, тем самым, ядро словаря. На периферии находятся явления, выводимые в системе, но не узаконенные узусом, или, наоборот, уже возникшие в узусе, но еще не узаконенные языковой нормой. Именно в этих случаях возникает трудная проблема лексикографической фильтрации материала.

Возьмем, например, слово *salubrious* в значении «полезный для здоровья». В системе английского языка, точнее в его семантических правилах, нет ничего, что запрещало бы словосочетания *salubrious mineral waters* «целебные минеральные воды», *salubrious diet [food]* «здоровая диета [пища]», *salubrious way of life* «здоровый образ жизни». В некоторые английские и американские словари (в частности, *The World Book Dictionary* и *Webster's Third*) они включаются без каких-либо помет, по-видимому, именно потому, что не запрещены системой. И все же они менее обычны, чем, скажем, такие словосочетания, как *salubrious mountain air* «целительный горный воздух», *salubrious climate* «здоровый климат», *salubrious environment* «экологически чистая среда» и т. п. Дело в том, что в узусе все более закрепляется один-единственный тип употребления *salubrious* (возможно из-за постоянного использования этого слова в рекламе курортов) — «здоровый» применительно к состоянию атмосферы, воздуха, окружающей среды. Имея в виду атмосферную незагрязненность, можно даже сказать *salubrious district [suburb]* «экологически чистый район [пригород]», *salubrious walk [camp-site]* «прогулочная дорожка [площадка для лагеря], расположенная в месте с чистым воздухом». За значением «здоровый, полезный» относительно пищи в узусе закрепилось прилагательное *wholesome*: *wholesome food [diet]* «здоровая пища [диета]». Из известных нам английских словарей это положение дел в какой-то мере отражено

лишь в Большом Оксфордском словаре (The Oxford English Dictionary on Historical Principles). Там *salubrious* в прямом значении разбито по сочетаемости на четыре группы употреблений: (1) о пище и медикаментах; (2) о воздухе, климате; (3) о занятиях; 4) о физиологических процессах. При этом первая и третья группа снабжены пометой *редк.* Ее следовало бы распространить и на последнюю группу.

Шкала употребительности имеет, как было сказано, еще один важный аспект — культурно-энциклопедический. Мы уже говорили в разделе I, что определяющей чертой всей современной лексикографии является синтез филологии и культуры в широком смысле слова. Раньше чисто филологический толковый словарь резко противопоставлялся энциклопедическому справочнику. В первом предметом описания являются слова, во втором — объекты реальной действительности. Однако в XX веке, особенно во второй его половине, границы интеллектуального мира современного человека необычайно раздвинулись. То, что несколько десятилетий или даже десятилетие назад было на далекой периферии этого мира даже у высокообразованных носителей языка, становится, благодаря распространению специальных знаний и внедрению технических достижений в быт, достоянием все более широких масс носителей языка. В результате периферийная лексика перемешается ближе к центру словаря.

Наглядное представление об изменениях такого рода дает рост числа терминов из области вычислительной техники и информатики в «тезаурусе» образованных людей. Полтора десятилетия назад мало кто знал о параллельных процессорах и персональных ЭВМ, машинной графике, электронной почте, платах, факсах, дисплеях, терминалах, мониторах, дискетах, принтерах и многом, многом другом. Сейчас все это стало неотъемлемой частью профессиональной деятельности тысяч людей, характерной приметой их рабочих мест, а иногда даже и повседневного быта.

Английские и особенно американские словари реагируют на этот и другие подобные процессы наращиванием элементов энциклопедичности. В них включается все большее число научных, научно-технических и других специальных терминов, а также общекультурных слов (библейзмов, мифологизмов и т. п.). <...>

Четвертая шкала, относительно которой должен оцениваться конфликт между устойчивым и меняющимся, реальным и потенциальным, центральным и периферийным — это шкала сложности или производности. Говоря об этой шкале, мы имеем в виду простоту и сложность, исходность и производность в любых проявлениях.

Наиболее наглядное из этих проявлений — деривация, или словообразование. Здесь возрастание сложности (периферийности) имеет ясное внешнее выражение — в производном слове появляются новые составные части.

Рассмотрим в связи с этим некоторые словообразовательные типы, в основе которых лежат слова *brother* «брат», *father* «отец», *friend* «друг», *gentleman* «джентльмен», *man* «мужчина», *mother* «мать», *sister* «сестра», *woman* «женщина»: (1) от основ этих восьми слов с помощью суффикса **-ly** «свойственный или подобающий тому, что обозначено основой», образуются качественные прилагательные *brotherly*, *fatherly*, *friendly*, *gentlemanly*, *manly*, *motherly*, *sisterly*, *womanly*; (2) от этих качественных прилагательных с помощью суффикса **-ness** образуются существительные со значением «характер поведения, свойственный или подобающий тому, что обозначено основой»: *brotherliness*, *fatherliness*, *friendliness*, *gentlemanliness*, *manliness*, *motherliness*, *sisterliness*, *womanliness*; (3) от них же прибавлением отрицательного суффикса **un-** получаются новые прилагательные со значением «не свойственный или не подобающий тому, что обозначено основой»: *unbrotherly*, *unfatherly*, *unfriendly*, *ungentlemanly*, *unmanly*, *unmotherly*, *unsisterly*, *unwomanly*; (4) наконец, от прилагательных на **un-** в свою очередь могут быть образованы существительные с суффиксом **-ness**, имеющие общее значение «характер поведения, не свойственный или не подобающий тому, что обозначено основой»: *unbrotherliness*, *unfatherliness*, *unfriendliness*, *ungentlemanliness*, *unmanliness*, *unmotherliness*, *unsisterliness*, *unwomanliness*. Всего, таким образом, получается 32 производных слова.

Очевидно, что они лексикографически неравноценны. Некоторые из них находятся ближе к центру словаря, другие — дальше от него. Это касается как целых словообразовательных типов, так и отдельных элементов внутри одного словообразовательного типа.

Ясно, например, что четвертый тип периферийнее, чем три первых, а второй и третий — периферийнее, чем первый. Об этом свидетельствует не только их большая словообразовательная сложность,

но и их обычная лексикографическая трактовка. В словаре The World Book Dictionary приводятся все 24 производных слова первых трех типов, но только четыре слова последнего типа: *unfriendliness*, *ungentlemanliness*, *unmanliness*, *unwomanliness*. В словаре The American Heritage Dictionary число производных последнего типа сокращается до двух: *unfriendliness* и *unmanliness*. В Chambers 20th Century Dictionary (London, etc., 1983) нет ни одного такого слова. В двух последних словарях приводятся все производные вида «X + ly», но только по два производных вида «un + X + ly» *unfriendly*, *unmanly* в Heritage, *unbrotherly*, *unmotherly* в Chambers.

К этому надо добавить, что хоть степень деривационной сложности второго и третьего типов одинакова, производные вида «un + X + ly» (*unbrotherly*) ближе к периферии словаря, чем производные вида «X + ly + ness» (*brotherliness*). Это связано прежде всего с меньшей активностью и меньшей сферой действия префикса *un-* по сравнению с суффиксом *-ness*. Указанное соотношение второго и третьего типов четко проявляется и в господствующей лексикографической трактовке соответствующих производных слов. В Chambers даны все производные вида «X + ly + ness», в Heritage — почти все (за исключением *gentlemanliness*). Между тем, как мы уже сказали, производные типа «un + X + ly» в общих словарях всего по два. Как бы ни относиться к этим лексикографическим решениям, совершенно ясно, что в них отражены достаточно устойчивые оценки степени периферийности слов.

Внутри одного словообразовательного типа слова тоже лексикографически неравноценны. Их положение относительно ядра и периферии определяется степенью их реальности — потенциальности. Чисто потенциальные слова — выводимые в системе по продуктивным правилам, но еще не закрепленные в узусе, не обросшие своими значениями, грамматическими и стилистическими особенностями и т. п. — располагаются ближе к периферии.

В типе «X + ly» в свое время было слово *fiendly* «злодейский, дьявольский», позднее выпавшее из языка. Оно и сейчас потенциально выводимо, но не фиксируется в качестве реально существующего ни одним английским или американским словарем (в Большом Оксфордском и Вебстеровском словарях оно помечено как устаревшее).

Все производные от основы *woman-* «женщина» более периферийны, чем соответствующие производные от основы *man* «мужчина».

Это ясно из непосредственного сравнения слов *manly* — *womanly*, *gentlemanly* — *gentlewomanly*, *gentlemanliness* — *genttewomanliness*, *ungentlemanly* — *ungentlewomanly*, *ungentlemanliness* — *ungentlewomanliness*. Словари четко улавливают это различие. Даже в таком почти исчерпывающем словаре, как Webster's Third (свыше 450 тыс. единиц), слов *gentlewomanliness*, *ungentlewomanly* и *ungentlewomanliness* нет, хотя соответствующая группа производных с основой *man-* приведена целиком.

Очень близка к словообразованию так называемая регулярная многозначность, т. е. такая комбинация значений многозначного слова, которая повторяется во многих или во всех словах определенного семантического класса. Обычно одно из повторяющихся значений служит в качестве исходного для других, производных от него значений. При прочих равных условиях производные значения, как и производные слова, оказываются дальше от центра, чем исходные.

По-видимому, все или почти все английские существительные, обозначающие сосуды, могут употребляться в значении «все вещество, которое содержится в наполненном сосуде»: *to drink a bottle of wine [a bucket of water, a glass of juice, a jug of milk]* «выпить бутылку вина [ведро воды, стакан сока, кувшин молока]», *to eat a whole kettle of stew [two spoons of sugar]* «съесть целый котелок тушеного мяса [две ложки сахара]». Однако не у всех существительных, обозначающих сосуды, это метонимически производное значение в равной мере актуально. Webster's Third фиксирует его для слов *basin* «миска», *bottle* «бутылка», *bucket* «ведро», *cup* «чашка», *glass* «стакан», *jug* «кувшин», *kettle* «котелок», *mug* «кружка», *plate* «тарелка», *spoon* «ложка» и ряда других, но не для слов *decanter* «графин», *pot* «котелок», *saucerpan* «кастрюля». Это решение, как и в только что рассмотренном словообразовательном примере, отражает разную лексикографическую оценку степени периферийности метонимического значения. В случаях *decanter*, *pot*, *saucerpan* оно является чисто потенциальным — выводимым по указанному выше общему правилу, но не узаконенным в узусе.

Последним лексикографически интересным проявлением шкалы сложности, или производи ости, является синтаксическая производность. Обычное правило здесь то же, что и в уже рассмотренных случаях словообразовательной и семантической производности: синтаксическая конструкция тем ближе к периферии языка, чем больше степень ее производности. <...>

Известно, что в английском языке есть несколько экзотичных (с точки зрения других языков) пассивных конструкций. В них в позицию подлежащего при пассивной форме глагола перемещается не прямое дополнение активной формы, как это происходит в обычной пассивной конструкции, а косвенное дополнение, предложное дополнение или даже обстоятельство места. Примеры: (1) *Mary gave him a book* «Мэри дала ему книгу» — *He was given a book* «Он был дан книгу»; (2) *They didn't even look at the picture* «Они даже не посмотрели на картину» — *The picture wasn't even looked at* букв. «Картина даже не была рассмотрена на»; (3) *Nobody has slept in the bed* «Никто не спал в этой постели» — *The bed hasn't been slept in* «Постель была не смята».

Все пассивные конструкции, включая и обычный пассив, производны от активной конструкции и в этом смысле периферийны. Более того, поскольку они строятся из активной конструкции с помощью достаточно общих грамматических правил, можно подумать, что они не представляют особого лексикографического интереса. Это, однако, не так. Пассив, как и любая другая грамматическая категория, может лексикализироваться. Тогда он приобретает бесспорную лексикографическую ценность. <...>

Последняя упомянутая выше шкала — шкала стилистической маркированности. Ясно, что чем менее стилистически маркировано слово, его значение, определенный пласт лексики, чем шире сфера их действия в разнообразных функциональных стилях и жанрах языка, тем ближе они к ядру словаря.

В сущности, многие типы стилистической маркированности были уже упомянуты в связи с другими распространенными выше шкалами — времени, пространства, употребительности и т. п. Остается обсудить лишь одну важную шкалу, отражающую отношение данной лексической единицы к кодифицированному литературному языку.

Основные деления этой шкалы по одну сторону от нейтрального ядра — поэтическая, книжная, высокая, официальная лексика, а по другую — разговорная, просторечная, сленг, вульгарная, грубая, жаргонная, непристойная и иная подобная лексика. Очевидно, что эти две части шкалы неравноценны. Все слова высокого стиля остаются в пределах литературной нормы и, следовательно, должны войти в любой достаточно представительный словарь языка, Лексика низкого стиля,

за исключением разговорной, лежит за пределами литературной нормы. При ее отборе для словаря следует руководствоваться теми же принципами, что и при отборе других типов периферийной лексики.

Положение различных пластов сниженной лексики относительно центра и периферии соответствует порядку их перечисления в предшествующем абзаце — от разговорной до непристойной.

Разговорная лексика образует последний слой литературного языка и, естественно, подлежит безусловному включению в словарь.

Непристойная лексика находится далеко за пределами литературного языка. Раньше она никогда не включалась в нормативные словари. Однако в последнее время отношение к ней начинает меняться. <...>

Промежуточные между разговорной и непристойной лексикой слон попадают в словарь с тем большей вероятностью, чем ближе они к разговорной лексике. В этом отношении наибольший интерес представляет сленг.

Если верить традиционным лексикографическим определениям (OED, Webster's Third, Random House и др., а также ряд теоретических работ), сленг — это разговорный язык, 1) стоящий значительно ниже стандартов языка образованных людей, 2) отличающийся образностью и экспрессивностью и 3) очень пестрый по своим непосредственным источникам (воровской жаргон, профессиональные языки, городское просторечие, диалекты и т. п.).

Значимость первого и последнего свойств сленга была переоценена во всех предшествующих изданиях БАРСа, и этот стилистический пласт был признан не существующим в английском языке. Помета *сленг* (sl.) была заменена серией помет *жарг.*, *прост.*, *спец.*, *проф.*, *диал.*

Это решение следует признать ошибочным. Оно рассыпает живую и своеобразную категорию, явно существующую в языковом сознании англичан и американцев как нечто единое, на ряд мало связанных друг с другом категорий, не имеющих никакой английской специфики.

Существо сленга лучше схвачено в определенных новых словарях (COBUILD, Advanced Learner's), в которых подчеркиваются его социально-прагматические аспекты. Это сниженно-разговорный язык, который используется в неофициальных ситуациях устного общения. Им, в отличие от просторечия, могут пользоваться без риска для своей языковой репутации и вполне образованные люди,

если они коротко знакомы друг с другом, вместе работают, имеют общие интересы и т. п. Этот пласт лексики обнаруживает, несмотря на свою неустойчивость и тенденцию к постоянному обновлению, большую жизнеспособность. На наших глазах он появляется и растет в языках, где его раньше не было, в частности, в русском. Достаточно вспомнить такие слова и обороты, как *железно*, *засветиться* (о преступнике), *тусовка* («встреча молодежной компании»), *колеса* («автомобиль»), *подсуетиться*, *завязать* («перестать делать что-л.»), *прокол* («неверный шаг, служебный проступок, за который можно ждать наказания»), *тянет не тянет* («справляется/не справляется»), *в нашей лавочке* («в нашем учреждении»), *дать шороху*, *пудрить мозги*, *в гробу я его видел*, *ему это до лампочки* и т. п. На основании этих соображений в новом БАРСе сленг, вместе с соответствующей пометой, был восстановлен в правах и достаточно широко представлен. Добавим, что присвоение этой пометы в НБАРСе целиком определяется практикой авторитетных английских и американских словарей, а они в этом отношении непоследовательны. Критики первого издания Webster's Third отмечали, например, что *big cheese* «шишка» и *big wheel* «шишка» помечаются в нем как сленг, а *big shot* и *big wig* (с тем же значением) — нет. НБАРС, естественно, мог унаследовать этот недостаток, поскольку претендовать на независимое суждение в столь тонком вопросе мы не могли. <...>

Мы не случайно настаиваем на важности соблюдения пропорций в освещении центральных и периферийных явлений. Этот казалось бы естественный и даже тривиальный принцип оказывается очень непросто реализовать на практике. Во многих словарях большого объема периферийные явления гипертрофируются и заслоняют собой основу всякого словаря — его нейтральное стабильное ядро. <...>

3 Словарь как справочник и как учебное пособие

Исторически словари возникли как справочники. Сначала — как справочники трудных слов, а со временем — всех слов вообще. В этом отношении они следовали за традиционными, грамматиками языков; грамматики тоже мыслились как руководства, помогающие не столько создавать тексты, сколько понимать их. Правила построения текстов сообщались скорее в риториках.

В начале XX века в трудах Ф. Брюно, О. Есперсена, Л. В. Щербы и других классиков лингвистики грамматика была разделена на пассивную и активную. В пассивной (традиционной) факты излагаются в направлении от грамматических форм к выражаемому ими содержанию. В активной грамматике, которая в последнее время больше известна как функциональная, изложение строится в обратном направлении — от значения, которое требуется выразить, к возможным средствам его выражения.

Активная грамматика учит говорить и писать, пассивная — понимать. Для говорения требуется существенно больший объем собственно языковых знаний, чем для понимания. Поэтому еще одно различие между активными и пассивными грамматиками состоит в том, что первая должна описывать языковые факты гораздо более полно и детально, чем вторая.

Параллельно аналогичные идеи развивались в лексикографии, причем активные словари, построенные в направлении от содержания к форме (они называются идеографическими), появились даже раньше, чем активные грамматики. Первый такой словарь — *Everyman's Thesaurus of English Words and Phrases*, — составленный Питером Марком Роже, увидел свет в Англии в 1852 г. <...>

Установка на активность отчетливо проявилась в НБАРСе. <...>

Расширение функций активного словаря ни в коем случае не означает, что новый БАРС утрачивает функцию справочника. Как бы далеко в направлении активности ни продвинулся англо-русский словарь, в русскоязычной среде функция справочника должна сохраняться за ним в качестве основной.

Это порождает некий лексикографический конфликт, требующий принципиального решения. В качестве справочника двуязычный словарь должен отвечать на возможно более широкий круг вопросов, касающихся, в частности, устаревших слов, архаизмов, диалектизмов, специальных терминов, жаргонизмов и других периферийных слоев лексики. В качестве учебного пособия для активного овладения языком он должен содержать богатую информацию о сочетаемости и синтаксических свойствах слов. При чересчур прямолинейной попытке удовлетворить требования, вытекающие из обеих этих установок, суммарная информация должна настолько возрасти в объеме, что в результате получится лексикографический монстр.

Указанный конфликт естественным образом разрешается на основе уже изложенного в предшествующем разделе принципа пропорциональной фокусировки. Дело в том, что требования, вытекающие из установки на справочность и активность, касаются различных частей словаря.

Активное и свободное владение литературным языком предполагает всестороннее знание только ядра его словаря. Для того, чтобы вполне адекватно выразить свою мысль, совсем не обязательно знать периферийную лексику. С другой стороны, чтобы понять какое-то слово в контексте, достаточно получить минимальную справку о его значении, но не о его комбинаторных возможностях и условиях употребления. Следовательно, чтобы удовлетворить наилучшим образом оба требования, достаточно описать подробно только ядро словаря, ограничившись простым переводом периферийной лексики. Но это — как раз тот тип лексикографического описания, который предполагается принципом пропорциональной фокусировки. Как видим, решение антиномии центр — периферия дает одновременно и решение антиномии словарь как учебное пособие — словарь как справочник.

4 Словарь и грамматика

Словарь и грамматика в совокупности составляют основу описания всякого языка. У них разные объекты — в словаре описываются лексические единицы, а в грамматике формулируются правила их изменения (морфология) и правила построения более сложных единиц из более простых (словообразование, синтаксис). Чтобы лингвистическое описание языка в целом было эффективным, необходимо добиться максимальной согласованности лексикографического и грамматического описаний. Это значит, что лексическим единицам в словаре следует явным образом приписать все те свойства, обращения к которым требуют правила грамматики. С другой стороны, в грамматике должны быть описаны все типы поведения лексических единиц, не учтенные словарем. В противном случае словарь и грамматика не смогут взаимодействовать друг с другом. Лингвистическое описание, удовлетворяющее обоим сформулированным здесь условиям, мы называем интегральным.

Требование интегральности, при всей его теоретической естественности и кажущейся тривиальности очень трудно реализовать на практике. К настоящему времени интегральные описания были разработаны только для компьютерных систем автоматического анализа и синтеза текстов, например, для систем машинного перевода. Такие системы не могут работать в условиях несогласованности словарной и грамматической информации. Что касается обычных грамматик и словарей, то они в принципе не настраиваются друг на друга. Традиционные грамматики пишут одни люди, а словари — другие, и почти никакого обмена информацией между ними не происходит. Единственная попытка согласовать грамматику и словарь в рамках традиционного (не формального) лингвистического описания была предпринята в Англии; см. школьную грамматику R. Quirk, S. Greenbaum, G. Leech, J. Svartvik: *A Grammar of Contemporary English* (London, 1972) и учебный словарь *Longman Dictionary of Contemporary English* (London, 1978), которые были задуманы и написаны как дополняющая друг друга пара.

В новом БАРСе была сделана попытка преодолеть разрыв между словарным и грамматическим описаниями языка по крайней мере в нескольких (но, к сожалению, далеко не во всех) важных точках. Мы условно обозначим их как (1) морфологическая характеристика слова, (2) классификация слов по частям речи, (3) синтаксические свойства слова.

5 Лексикографические портреты и типы: перспектива

В начале предшествующего раздела мы ввели понятие интегрального описания языка — такого описания, в котором словарь и грамматика согласованы друг с другом и способны к функциональному взаимодействию. На этой основе можно определить понятие лексикографического портрета: под лексикографическим портретом понимается по возможности исчерпывающая характеристика всех лингвистически существенных свойств лексемы, выполненная в рамках интегрального описания языка.

Интегральное описание предполагает, в частности, что в словаре каждой лексеме должны быть приписаны все свойства, обращения к которым могут потребовать лингвистические правила. Если подойти

к описанию лексем с этой точки зрения, то окажется, что число их лексикографически релевантных свойств гораздо больше и что они гораздо разнообразней, чем принято было думать до сих пор. Первое отличие лексикографического портрета от обычного словарного описания как раз и состоит в обогащении словарной статьи лексемы новыми типами информации и в существенном расширении традиционной информации.

Еще одно важное свойство лексикографического портрета состоит в том, что всякий портрет должен соответствовать определенному лексикографическому типу. Лексикографическим типом мы называем более или менее компактную группу лексем, имеющих общие просодические, морфологические, синтаксические, семантические или сочетаемостные свойства и требующих поэтому единообразного словарного описания. Лексикографический тип тем интереснее, чем больше число таких общих свойств и чем больше число лингвистических правил, которые к этим свойствам апеллируют. Теоретически выявленный набор лексикографических типов данного языка является естественным и надежным основанием всякой практической лексикографической работы.

Ясно, что не все лексемы, принадлежащие к данному лексикографическому типу должны обладать всеми характерными для него свойствами. Детали лексикографических портретов могут не совпадать. При этом при описании лексем в словаре необходимо уделять равное внимание как их общим свойствам (проблема унификации, или лексикографических типов), так и тому, что отличает их друг от друга (проблема индивидуализации, или лексикографических портретов). <...>

Конкретное обсуждение понятия лексикографического типа применительно к двуязычному словарю разумно провести на материале, который составляет национальную специфику входного языка относительно выходного. Даже с этим естественным ограничением количество уже известных нам лексикографических типов исчисляется сотнями.

Выявление <...> лексикографических типов в исходном языке и их семантическое сопоставление с ближайшими аналогами в выходном языке должно рассматриваться как сверхзадача двуязычной лексикографии. Прямую задачу лексикографа можно считать выполненной тогда, когда пользователь находит в словаре всю нужную ему

информацию. Но высшим достижением двуязычной лексикографии, безусловно, может быть признан лишь такой словарь, в котором лексика представлена как система. Последовательное и исчерпывающее сопоставление лексикографических типов в двуязычных словарях как раз и является средством достижения этой цели.

Aids to the study of the text

1. What are the main dictionary centres and dictionary publishers in the world?
2. What information does the author give about the rating of dictionaries in Great Britain?
3. What are the outstanding names in the history of lexicography?
4. What role did France play in the field of dictionary-making in the post-war period?
5. What are the most fruitful ways of registering words, meanings, stylistically coloured words / meanings, etc. in dictionaries?

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