**SEMANTICS**

**Semantics**

**It is the scientific study of meaning. It is from the Greek noun sema “sign, signal” ,and the verb semanio “signal,mean”.**

**It fascinated the philosophers but ignored by linguists until recently.**

**Chomsky 1957 recognized the importance of meaning.**

**Meaning**

* **Conceptual Meaning (Def.)**

**Conceptual meaning covers those basic, essential components of meaning which are conveyed by the literal use of a word.**

**Book: a number of bound pages, usually with a cover.**

* **Associative Meaning (Def.)**

**Associative meaning of a word may include shades of feeling and judgment.**

**Book: education, or boredom**

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**Only the conceptual meaning is of the interest of the linguist.**

**The associative meaning is of the interest of the poet.**

**Semantics**

1. **A linguist who is studying meaning tries to understand why certain words and constructions can be combined together in a semantically accepted way, while others cannot.**

**For ex. My brother is a bachelor.**

**My brother is a spinster.**

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1. **A linguist studying semantics would also like to know why anyone who knows a lang. can recognize certain phrases and sentences as having similar meaning, and would ask how having similar meaning, and would ask how it is that people can.**

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**For ex. Indicate to me the root to my habitual abode.**

**Show me the way to go home.**

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1. **A linguist who is studying semantics also needs to explain the fact that hearers not only recognize ambiguous sentences, but they can also use the surrounding context to choose the most likely of the possible interpretations.**

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**For ex.**

**Visiting relatives can be boring.**

**But**

**Visiting relatives can be boring; I wish we did not have to go.**

**Semantics**

**Word meaning**

**Refer to the real sense of the word.**

**Sentence meaning**

**Refer to the meanings that hold parts of the sentence.**

**Semantic features**

**For ex. My cat studied linguistics.**

**Def.**

**This procedure is a means of analyzing meaning in terms of semantic features . Features such as + animate, - animate ; + human,-human; + male, - male; can be treated as the basic features involved in differentiating the meaning of each word in the language from every other word.**

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Table cow girl woman boy man

animate - + + + + +

human - - + + + +

male - - - - + +

adult - + - + - +

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**One can also characterize that feature which is crucially required in a noun in order for it to appear as the subject of a verb, supplementing the syntactic analysis with semantic features:**

**The \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ is reading a book.**

**N (+ human )**

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**This approach then gives us the ability to predict what nouns would make the above sentence semantically odd.**

**But, what about the following words:**

**warning advice love**

**Lexical relations**

**What is the meaning of conceal?**

**It is the same as hide.**

**What is the meaning of shallow?**

**It is the opposite of deep.**

**What is the meaning of daffodil?**

**It is a kind of a flower.**

**Types of lexical relationships**

1. **Synonymy**

**A term used for words with the same meaning but different sounds.**

**For ex. Cab taxi**

**Bucket Pail**

1. **Antonymy**

**Two terms with the opposite meanings are called antonyms.**

**For ex. Quick slow**

**Big small**

**It is divided into two types:**

1. **Gradable antonyms:**

**Big small Bigger smaller**

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**And the negative of one member of the pair does not necessarily imply the other.**

**For ex.**

**The dog is not old.**

**It does not imply that the dog is small.**

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1. **Non-gradable antonyms :**

**Comparative constructions are not normally used (the expressions deader or more dead sound strange), and the negative of one member does imply the other.**

**For ex.**

**Not dead = alive**

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1. **Homonyms**

**When one form (written and spoken) has two or more unrelated meanings.**

**They have separate meanings but accidentally come to have the same form.**

**For ex.**

**Ear (for hearing ) Ear (of corn)**

**Bank (of a river) Bank ( financial institution)**

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**Here we are not characterizing the meaning of a word in terms of its component features, but in terms of its relationship to other words.**

**This procedure is called as the analysis of lexical relations.**

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1. **Homophony**

**When two or more different (written forms) have the same pronunciation.**

**For ex.**

**Bare bear Meat meet Flower flour**

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1. **Hyponymy**

**When the meaning of one form is included in the other, the relationship is described as hyponyms.**

**For ex.**

**Dog-animal Daffodil-flower Carrot-vegetable**

**Daffodil is a hyponym of flower**

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**If dog is a hyponym of animal, what is horse?**

**We can say that two or more terms which share the same superordinte (higher up) term are co- hyponyms. So horse and dog are co-hyponyms and the superordinate term is animal.**

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1. **Polysemy**

**Relatedness of meaning accompanying identical form. One form (written or spoken) having multiple meanings which are all related by extension.**

**For ex.**

**Head of body Head of a company**

**Foot of a person Foot of a bed**

**Run (a person does) ( color does)**

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**Selectional restriction**

**Semantic constraints on the co-occurrence of lexical items with each other in sequence.**