جامعة الملك فيصل
عمادة التعلم الإلكتروني والتعليم عن بعد
كلية الآداب

اسم المقرر

علم الدلالة والبراغماتيك

Semantics and Pragmatics

أستاذ المقرر

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Introductory Lecture

Course Description:

This course gives an introduction to two linguistic fields that deal with "meaning"
Semantics, i.e., the study of the conventional literal meaning,
And **Pragmatics**, i.e., the study of the interactional intended meaning.

Requirements:

You are expected to come to the course with:

1. Enthusiasm
2. Readiness
3. Minds

This course is not about memorization of asset of concepts and definitions. Rather, what is required is a general openness of mind and the exercise of intelligence and creativity.

Overview:

1. Utterance vs Sentence
2. Non-verbal Communication
3. Semantic Relations
4. Prototypes
5. Speech Act Theory
6. Conversational Maxims
7. Politeness and Face
   And other more!

Resources:

1. Introducing English Semantics by Charles W. Kreidler (Chapter2)
2. How English Works: A Linguistic Introduction by Ann Curzan and Michael Adams (Chapter 7 - 8)
3. The Study of Language by George Yule (Chapter 11 - 12)

Lecture 1

Both **Semantics** and **Pragmatics** are concerned with people's ability to use language meaningfully.
While **semantics** is mainly concerned with a speaker's competence to use the language system, the chief focus of **pragmatics** is a person's ability to derive meaning from specific kinds of speech situations.

(i.e., to recognize what the speaker is referring to; to 'fill in' information that the speaker takes for granted and doesn't bother to say.)

"I'm hungry"
Said by a beggar who has not eaten all day.
Said by a child who hopes to put off going to bed
Said by a man who wants to have lunch with his co-worker.

The 3 events obviously have something in common and yet, they indicate different intentions and are liable to be interpreted differently because the situations and the participants are different.

Utterance vs. Sentence:
An utterance is an event that happens just once; a sentence is a construction of words in a particular meaningful sequence.
The meaning of a sentence is determined by the meanings of the individual words and the syntactic construction in which they occur.
The meaning of an utterance is the meaning of the sentence plus the meanings of the circumstances: the time and place, the people involved, (the physical-social context).
E.g., **Our visit to the factory was wonderful.**

Implicature:
An additional meaning; a bridge constructed by the hearer to relate one utterance to some previous utterance (unconsciously).
(1) Barbara: **How did you do on the examination?**
Adam: **I think I'll just drop this course.**
(2) Jim: **Would you like to go shopping tomorrow night?**
Laura: **We have guests coming from out of town.**

Prosody: A spoken utterance consists of more than just words. In speech, meanings are communicated not only by **what** is said but also by **how** it is said. For example,
A: Has the Winston Street bus come yet?
B: Sorry. I didn't understand. **What** did you say?
C: I'm afraid Fred didn't like the remark I made.
D: Oh? What did you **say**?
E: Some of my partners said they wouldn't accept these terms.
F: And you? What did **you** say?
G: You're misquoting me. I didn't say anything like that.
H: Oh? What **did** you say?

Non-verbal communication:

There are some ways of using the voice including e.g., laughing, giggling, and crying that are vocal but not verbal. These are called **paralanguage**.

Similarly, there are visible signs, **gestures,** 'body language'—which possibly create an effect on the interpretation of a spoken message.

Consider these visual signs:

Nodding the head in response to an utterance.

Pretending to yawn, with finger tips in front of mouth.

Holding up a thumb from a closed fist.

Pinching one's nose closed with thumb and forefinger.

Shoulders are moved upward and down again, possibly repeated ('shrugging shoulders').

The palm of one hand is brought up and slaps smartly against the forehead.

The hand, slightly cupped, is pulled across the forehead as if wiping something away.

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Lecture 2
Semantic Relations

Semantic Relations Among words

In everyday talk, we frequently give the **meanings of words**, not in terms of their component features, but **in terms of their relationships**.

E.g., the meaning of **"shallow"** is the opposite of **"deep"**, the word **"conceal"** is the same as **"hide"**, and **"tulip"** is a kind of **"flower".**

Examples of the lexical relations types are: ***Synonymy, Antonymy, Hyponymy, Homophony, Homonymy,*** and ***Polysemy***.

Synonyms are two or more forms with very closely related meanings, which are often, but not always, interchangeable in sentences. E.g., ***broad/wide***, ***almost/nearly***, ***cab/taxi***, ***youth/adolescent***, ***purchase/buy***.

There is **no "total sameness"**. One word could be appropriate in a sentence, but its synonym would be odd: Cathy had only one **answer** correct on the test.

Synonyms differ in formality: ***My father purchased a large automobile*** vs. *my dad bought a big car*.

Two forms with opposite meanings are called **antonyms**, **quick/slow**, **rich/poor**, **old/young**, **alive/dead**, **true/false**.

Gradable antonyms can be used in comparative construction, e.g., **bigger than/smaller than**.

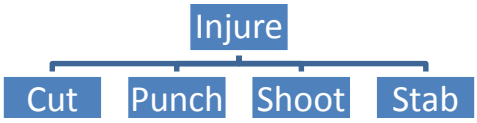
The negative of one member of the pair does not imply the other: He is not old **does not imply** He is young.

With **non-gradable antonym**, the negative of one does indeed imply the other: He is not dead ***means*** He is alive.

Reversives mean not negative but to do the reverse, e.g., ***tie/untie***, ***enter/exit***, ***pack/unpack***, ***lengthen/shorten***, ***raise/lower***, ***dress/undress***.

Hyponymy means the meaning of form is included in the meaning of another, e.g., **tulip** is a hyponym of **flower**, **dog/animal**, **Chihuahua/dog**, **carrot/vegetable**.

Not only words that can be hyponyms, verbs too. (e.g., cut, punch, shoot, and stab are **co-hyponyms** of the superordinate "injure"



Homophony, Homonymy, and Polysemy:

1. When **two or more different written forms have the same pronunciation**, they are **homophones**, e.g., **meat/meet**, **flour/flower**, **pail/pale**, **sew/so**, **see/sea**, **bare/bear**.

2. When **one form has two or more unrelated meanings**, they are **homonyms**, e.g., **bank** (of a river) – **bank** (financial institute), **bat** (flying creature) – **bat** (used in sport), **race** (contest of speed) – **race** (ethnic group), **mole** (on skin-animal)

3.When **one form has multiple meanings** that are all related by extension, it is **polysemy**, e.g., **head** (the top of your body/the top of a company), **foot** (of a person, of bed, of mountain), **run** (person does, water does, color does).

How do you distinguish between homonymy and polysemy? Via dictionary.
Date (a point in time) -**Date** (fleshy fruit)
So they are **homonyms**.
Date (on a letter)
Date (an appointment)
Date (a social meeting with someone)
So they are **polysemy**.

Lecture 3
Semantic Features

Semantic features

One helpful approach to study meaning could be by the means of accounting for the **"oddness"** we experience when we read sentences:

NP V NP

The hamburger ate the boy.
The table listens to the radio.
The horse is reading the newspaper.

The oddness of these sentences does not derive from their syntactic structure. According to the syntactic rules, we have well-formed structures.
These sentences are syntactically good, but semantically odd.

The hamburger ate the boy.
Since the sentence, ***The boy ate the hamburger*** is acceptable.
What's the problem?
The **components of the noun *hamburger*** must be **significantly different** from those of the noun ***boy***, so only one can be used as the subject of the verb ate.
The kind of noun that can be the subject of the verb ***ate*** must denote an entity that is capable of ***"eating".***

We need to determine the crucial semantic features that any noun must have in order to be used as the subject of the verb ***ate***. Such an element may be as general as **"animate being".**
We can then use this idea to describe part of the meaning of words as either **having (+)** or **not having (–)** that particular feature.
So, the feature that the noun boy has is **"+animate"** and the feature that the noun hamburger has is **"–animate".**

Componential Analysis

The term **componential analysis** is a **semantic approach which assumes that word meaning can be described in terms of distinct components**, many of which are binary.
Components are qualities embedded in any word's meaning, like the ones seen in dictionary definitions.
E.g., ***Dog*** refers to a mammal. Also, it refers to domesticated and carnivore.

Dog [+mammal] [+domesticated] [+ carnivore]
Wolf [+mammal] [- domesticated] [+ carnivore]
One typical example assumes the features **ANIMATE**, **HUMAN**, **MALE** and **ADULT**.
That is known as componential analysis. This approach is used to analyze the meaning of certain types of nouns in terms of semantic features.

Analyzing meaning in terms of semantic features

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

We can also characterize the **semantic features** that are required in a noun in order for it to appear as the subject of a particular verb.

The _____ is reading the newspaper. **N [+human]**

This approach would help predict which nouns make this sentence **semantically odd**. (***table***, ***horse*** and ***hamburger***)

The approach is only a start on analyzing the conceptual components of word meaning, but it is not without problems.

For many words in a language, it may not be as easy to come up with neat components of meaning. Nouns, such as advice, threat and warning

Lecture 4
Semantic/Thematic roles

The **"roles"** words fulfill within the situation described by sentence.
The boy kicked to the ball.
The verb describes an action (kick).
The noun phrase (NP) in the sentence describes the roles of entities, such as people and things, involved in the action.
We can identify a small number of semantic roles (also called **"thematic roles"** for these noun phrases).

Agent and theme

The boy kicked the ball.
One role is taken by NP ***the boy*** and "the entity that performs the action" known as the **agent**.
Another role is taken by ***the ball*** of "the entity that is affected by the action" which is called the **theme**.
The theme can also be an entity (***the ball***) that is simply being **described**. (I.e. not performing action), as in ***The ball was red.***

Agents and themes are the most common semantic roles
Although **agents** are typically human (the boy) they can also be non-human entities that cause action, as a natural force (the wind), a machine (A car), or creature (The dog), all of which affect the ball as theme.
The boy kicked the ball.
The wind blew the ball away.
A car ran over the ball.
The dog caught the ball.

Instrument and Experiencer

If an **agent** uses another entity in order to perform an action, that other entity fills the **role** of **instrument**.
The boy cut the rope with a razor.
He drew the picture with a piece of chalk.

When a noun phrase is used to designate an entity as the person who has a **feeling, perception or state**, it fills the semantic role of **experiencer.**
If we **see, know or enjoy** something, we are not really performing an action (hence we are not agents). We are in the role of **experiencer.**
In the sentence: ***The boy*** feel sad, the experiencer (the boy) is the only semantic role.
In the question, Did ***you*** hear ***that noise***? The experiencer is you and the theme is that noise.

Location, source and goal

A number of other semantic roles designate where an entity is in the description of an event.
Where an entity is (on the table, in the room) fills the role of **location**.
Where the entity moves from is the **source** (from Jeddah) and where it moves to is the **goal** (to Abha), as in **We drove from Jeddah to Abha.**

All **semantic roles** are illustrated in the following scenario:

Latifah saw a fly on the wall.
Experiencer/theme/location

Latifa borrowed a magazine from Ahmad.
Agent/theme/source

She squashed the fly with the magazine.
Agent/theme/instrument

She handed the magazine back to Ahmed.
Agent/theme/goal

Ooh, thanks, said Ahmed.
Agent

Determining the role that the NPs play in the situations:

Agent: The entity that performs an action.
Theme: The entity undergoing an action or movement.
Instrument: The entity used to perform an action.
Experiencer: The entity that has a feeling, perception, or state.

Location: The place where an action occurs.
Source: The starting point for movement.
Goal: The endpoint for movement.

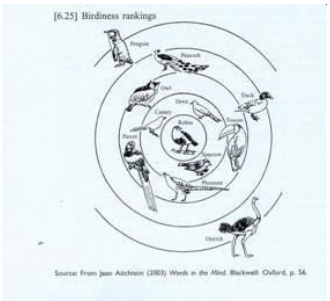
Lecture 5

One fact about concepts expressed by words is that their members can be **graded in terms of their typicality.**
A good example of this involves the concept **Bird**.
Even assuming that we all think of a bird as an animal that lays eggs, has feathers and can fly; we still feel that some of these creatures are more birdlike then others.

While the words **canary, dove, duck, flamingo, parrot and robin** are **all equally co-hyponyms** of the superordinate **bird**, they are not all considered to be equally good examples of the category bird.
According to some researchers, the most characteristic instance of the category "bird" is robin. This idea is known as the prototype.

The concept of prototype helps explain the meaning of certain words, like **bird**, not in terms of semantic features (e.g. "has feathers", "has wings"), but in terms of resemblance to the clearest example.
Thus, even native speakers of English might wonder if **ostrich** or **penguin** should be hyponyms of bird, but have no trouble deciding about **sparrow** or **pigeon**.
These last two are much closer to the Prototype.


The following is a chart showing the Prototype of a bird based on the judgment of California undergraduate (Katamba 2005)



What is a Prototype then?
Prototype is about mental representation of meaning or categorization.
Let's define a **bird**: has feathers, grown from an egg, can fly, makes sounds and so on.
If I asked you now, if an ostrich or a penguin is a bird, chances are high that you would say yes, while they don't fit the definition. And this is where prototypes come into play.
What we are dealing with is a gradual categorization of meaning with an instance of representation.

A **Prototype** is an **object or referent that is considered typical for the whole set**.
Thus, if you encounter the concept ***door*** in isolation and immediately think of ***a door swinging on hinges*** rather than one that ***slides*** or ***rotates***.
That kind of door is, for you, the prototype for all doors.
But not everybody is likely to have the same Prototype for a particular set.

Given the category label ***furniture***, we are quick to recognize ***chair*** as a better example than ***bench*** or ***stool***.
Given ***clothing***, people recognize ***shirts*** quicker than ***shoes***, and given ***vegetables***, they accept ***carrot*** before ***potato*** or ***tomato***.


Lecture 6
Reference

A **referring expression** is a noun phrase that is used in an utterance and is linked to something outside language, some living or dead or imaginary entity.
That 'something' is the **referent**.
A referring expression is **not a referent**; the phrase *a banana* can be a referring expression but it is not a banana.
"Washington has three syllables, and 600,000 people".

The existence of **a referring expression** does not guarantee the existence of **a referent** in the physical-social world.
We can easily use language to create expressions with fictitious referents such as:
the skyscrapers of Alahssa
the river of Riyadh
the present King of the USA

Primary referring expressions
like ***a dog***, ***your friend***, ***George Adams***, ***the flowers in that basket***; (they refer directly to their referents).

Secondary referring expressions
like ***he***, ***the big ones***, ***ours***, ***that one***. These expressions are headed by pronouns and they refer indirectly; their referents can only be determined from primary referring expressions in the context in which they are used.

Referents differ from one another in 3 ways:
Unique like ***Lake Ontario*** vs. **Non-unique** like ***a lake***;
Concrete, such as ***an orange***, vs. **Abstract**, *an* ***idea***;
Countable like *a* ***bottle***, ***several bottles*** vs. **Non-countable** like ***milk***

First, Unique and non-unique referents
We swam in ***Lake Ontario****.*
We swam in ***a lake****.*
Both of the underlined noun phrases are **referring expressions**. They might have the same referent, but ***a lake*** can refer to various bodies of water whereas ***Lake Ontario*** always refers to the same body of water.

Fixed reference: ***Lake Ontario***, ***Japan***, ***Barak Obama***, ***the Philippine Islands***
Variable reference: ***that dog***, ***my uncle***, ***several people***, ***a lake***, ***the results***

Fixed Reference ➔ Inference
For example, in a restaurant, one waiter can ask another, ***Where's the cucumber salad sitting?*** and receive the reply, ***He's sitting by the window***.
You might ask someone, Can I look at your Chomsky? And get the response, Sure, it's on the shelf over there. These examples make it clear that we can use names associated with things (salad) to refer to people, and use names of people (Chomsky) to refer to things.
An inference is additional information to connect between what is said and what must be meant.

Second, Concrete and abstract referents

Words such as ***dog, door, leaf, stone*** denote **concrete** objects, which can be seen or touched; the objects denoted by words like ***idea, problem, reason, knowledge*** are **abstract;** they cannot be perceived directly through the senses.

Words occur in different utterances may have different effects on other words. Consider these contrasts:

the key to the front door // **the key to success**

a bright light // **a bright future** ***key*** and ***bright*** have **literal meanings** when they occur in concrete contexts and **figurative meanings** in abstract contexts.

Third, Countable and non-countable referents

Noun phrases in English are either **countable** or **non-countable.**

Both countable and non-countable noun phrases may be **concrete** or **abstract**.

Concrete countable expressions refer to items that are separate from one another, like ***apples***, ***coins***, ***pens*** and ***toothbrushes***, which can ordinarily be counted one by one. Abstract countable phrases have such nouns as ***idea, problem, suggestion***.

Non-countable referents

Non-countable phrases, if their references are **concrete**, have 3 kinds of reference:

Some refer to continuous substances, such as ***apple sauce***, ***ink***, ***mud*** and ***toothpaste***, which do not consist of natural discrete parts.

Others name substances that consist of numerous particles not worth counting, like ***sand*** and ***rice***.

A few non-countables are like ***furniture, jewelry, luggage,*** collections whose parts have quite different names.

Abstract non-countables such as ***advice, information, beauty,*** are treated in the English language as indivisible.

➔ ***an apple*, *a coin*, *a pen*, *a toothbrush***

some apples*, *some coins*, *some pens*, *some toothbrushes

some apple sauce*, *some mud*, *some ink*, *some toothpaste

The **singular countable noun phrase** must have an overt specifier; the **plural countable and non-countable** may have a zero specifier; the specifier ***some*** can be replaced by zero in the last two lines above.

Certain animals are named in countable phrases but when considered as food the names appear in non-countable phrases.

(a) chicken*, *(a) lobster*, *(a) turkey

In contrast, there are animal names of Anglo-Saxon origin such as ***cow*, *calf*, *pig***—all countable nouns—matched by food names of Norman-French origin: ***beef*, *veal*, *pork,*** which are non-countable.

Some nouns name substances when they occur in non-countable phrases and in countable phrases designate items originally made from those substances.

glass*, *iron*, *paper*,** ***a glass*, *an iron*, *a paper

What is regarded as a substance, so non-countable, may appear in a countable phrase to indicate a certain quantity or type of the substance.
a coffee various soups several cheeses

At the end countable/non-countable discussion,
They are nouns that name collections of items—***furniture***, ***jewelry***, ***luggage***—which are always non-countable.
The specific items included in these collections are indicated by countable nouns—***chair***, ***bed***; ***necklace***, ***ring***; ***trunk***, ***suitcase***.
In other instances there are matching nouns: ***rain*** and ***raindrop***, ***snow*** and ***snowflake***.
There are a few nouns which occur only as plurals: ***scissors***, ***tweezers***; ***trousers***, ***shorts***, ***jeans***, etc.

Lecture 7
Deixis

Deixis

Very common words in our language can't be interpreted at all, if we don't know the physical context of the speaker. These are words such as ***here*** and ***there***, ***this*** or ***that***, ***now*** and ***then***, ***yesterday***, ***today*** or ***tomorrow***, as well as pronouns such as ***you***, ***me***, ***she***, ***him***, ***it***, ***them***. Some sentences of English are virtually impossible to understand if we don't know who is speaking, about - whom, where and when.

You'll have to bring it back tomorrow because she isn't here today.
Out of context, this sentence is really **vague**.
(i.e. that the delivery driver will have to return on February 15 to Building 7 with the large PlayStation box addressed to Khalid Ali).
tomorrow and ***here*** are obvious examples of bits of language that we can only understand in terms of the speaker's intended meaning. They are technically known as **deictic expressions**, from the **Greek word deixis, which means "pointing"** via language.

We use deixis to point to things (*it*, *this*, *these boxes*) and **people** (*him*, *them*, *those students*), sometimes called **personal deixis**.
Words and phrases used to **point to a location** (*here*, *there*, *near that*) are examples of **spatial deixis**, and those used to **point to a time** (*now*, *then*, *last week*) are examples of **temporal deixis**.

All these **deictic expressions** have to be interpreted in terms of which **person**, **place** or **time** the speaker has in mind.
We make a broad distinction between what is marked as **close to the speaker** (*this*, *here*, *now*) and **what is distant** (*that*, *there*, *then*).

We can also indicate whether movement is **away from the speaker's location** (***go***) or **toward the speaker's location** (***come***). If you're looking for someone and she appears, moving toward you, you can say, ***Here she comes!*** If, however, she is moving away from you in the distance, you're more likely to say, ***There she goes!*** The same deictic effect explains the different situations in which you would tell someone to, ***Go to bed*** vs. ***Come to bed***.

People can actually **use deixis to have some fun**. The coffee-shop owner who puts up a big sign that reads ***Free Coffee Tomorrow*** (to get you to return to the coffee-shop) can always claim that you are just one day too early for the free drink.

One basic way of referring to something is to point to it. Every language has **deictic words** which 'point' to 'things' in the physical-social context of the speaker and addressee. For example, if we should encounter a written or recorded message like:
I was disappointed that ***you*** didn't come ***this afternoon***.
I hope ***you***'ll join ***us tomorrow***.
We wouldn't be able to identify the referents of *I, you, us, this afternoon* or *tomorrow*; **The meaning of any deictic elements can only be interpreted through their contexts**.

English deictic words include

(1) Personal diexis: ***I, you*** and ***we,*** which 'point' to the participants in any speech; ***he, she, it*** and ***they,*** when used to refer to others in the environment.
(2) Spatial deixis: ***here*** and ***there,*** which designate space close to the speaker or farther away; ***this/these*** and ***that/those,*** which indicate entities close to or removed from the speaker.
(3) temporal deixis: ***now, then, yesterday, today, tomorrow, last week, next month,*** *etc.* all relative to the time.

Words which can be deictic are not always so

Today and ***tomorrow*** **are deictic in** "***We can't go today, but tomorrow will be fine***." They are **not deictic in** "***Today's costly apartment buildings may be tomorrow's slums***."
Similarly, ***here*** and ***there*** **are deictic in** "***James hasn't been here yet. Is he there with you***?"
They **are not deictic in** "***The children were running here and there***."
The pronoun ***you*** **is not deictic when used with the meaning 'one; any person or persons**,' as in "***You can lead a horse to water but you can't make him drink***."

Anaphora

We usually make a distinction between introducing new referents (a puppy) and referring back to them (the puppy, it).
We saw a funny YouTube video about a boy washing a puppy in a small bath.
The puppy started struggling and shaking and the boy got really wet.
When he let go, it jumped out of the bath and ran away.

In this type of referential relationship, the second referring expression is an example of anaphora ("**referring back**").
The first mention is called **the antecedent**.
So, in our example, ***a boy***, ***a puppy*** and ***a small bath*** **are antecedents** and***The puppy***, ***the boy***, ***he***, ***it*** and ***the bath*** **are anaphoric expressions.**

Anaphora can be defined as subsequent reference to an already introduced entity.
Mostly we use anaphora in texts to maintain reference. The connection between an **antecedent** and an **anaphoric expression** is created by use of a pronoun (***it***), or a phrase with the plus the antecedent noun (***the puppy***), or another noun that is related to the antecedent in some way (***The little dog ran out of the room***).

Lecture 8
Collocations

Collocations

Words tend to occur with other words: *blond + hair*.
Fast car not quick car! Fast food not quick food.
Quick glance not fast glance. Quick meal not fast meal.
These examples help to illustrate Firth's (1951) argument: "**You shall know a word by the company it keeps**."
Certain words tend to appear together or "keep company". This keeping company is what is called in semantics "**collocation**".

A collocation is a pair or group of words that are often used together. These combinations sound natural to native speakers, but how about students of English?
Some collocations are fixed, for example ***take a photo***, where no word other than ***take*** collocates with ***photo*** to give the same meaning.
Some collocations are more open, where several different words may be used to give a similar meaning, for example ***keep to / stick to the rules***.

Here are some more examples of collocations:

1. You must make an effort and study for your exams (**NOT** do an effort)
2. Did you watch TV last night? (**NOT** look at TV)
3. This car has a very powerful engine. (**NOT** strong engine)

Sometimes, a pair of words may not be absolutely wrong, and people will understand what is meant, but it may not be the natural, normal collocation.
I did a few mistakes vs. ***I made a few mistakes***.

Why learn collocations?

a) Give you the **most natural way to say something**: smoking is ***strictly forbidden*** is more natural than smoking is ***strongly forbidden***.
b) Give you **alternative ways of saying something**, which may be more expressive or more precise: instead of repeating, It was ***very cold and very dark***, we can say It was ***bitterly cold and pitch dark***.
c) Improve your style in writing: instead of saying poverty ***causes crime***, you can say poverty ***breeds crime***; instead of saying a ***big meal*** you can say a ***substantial meal***.

Finding collocations

You can train yourself to notice them whenever you read or listen to anything in English.
1. Cathy had promised to ***give*** her sister ***a call*** as soon as she got home but she decided to ***run*** herself ***a bath*** first. She had ***a sharp pain*** in her side and hoped that ***a hot bath*** might ***ease the pain***.
2. any good learner's dictionary. For example, ***sharp***
a sharp pain ➔ ***a sharp bend***/turn… ***a sharp difference***/distinction… ***a sharp increase***/drop

Learning collocations is not so different from learning any vocabulary item. There are many different types of collocations.

Adjectives and nouns

Notice adjectives that are typically used with particular nouns.

Jean always wears ***bright color***.
We had *a* ***brief chat*** about the exams.
Unemployment is *a* ***major problem*** for the government at the moment.

Nouns and verbs

The examples below are all to do with economics and business:

The ***economy boomed*** in the 1990s, [the economy was very strong]
The ***company has grown*** and now employs 50 more people than last year.
The ***company has expanded*** and now has branches in most major cities.
The ***two companies merged*** in 2003 and now form one very large corporation.

Noun + noun (a… of…)

Sam read the lies about him, he felt ***a surge of anger***, [literary: a sudden angry feeling]
Every parent feels ***a sense of pride*** when their child does well or wins something.

Verbs and expressions with prepositions

I was ***filled with horror*** when I read the newspaper report of the explosion.
When she spilt juice on her new skirt the little girl ***burst into tears***, [suddenly started crying].

Verbs and adverbs

Some verbs have particular adverbs which regularly collocate with them.

She ***pulled steadily*** on the rope and helped him to safety, [pulled firmly and evenly]
He ***placed*** the beautiful vase ***gently*** on the window shelf.
'I love you and want to marry you,' Derek ***whispered softly*** to Marsha.
She ***smiled proudly*** as she looked at the photos of her new grandson.

Adverbs and adjectives

They are ***happily married***.
I am ***fully aware*** that there are serious problems. [I know well]
Harry was ***blissfully unaware*** that he was in danger. [Harry had no idea at all, often used about something unpleasant]

Synonyms and confusable words

Words meaning "***old*** "
I met an ***old friend*** the other day. It's a very ***old building***.
She studied ***ancient history***. In ***ancient times***, life was very hard.
This shop sells ***antique furniture***. She collects ***antique jewelry***, [old and valuable]
I helped an ***elderly person*** who was trying to cross the road, [elderly is more polite than old]

Other synonym pairs synonyms

charge vs. ***load***

injure vs. ***damage***

grow vs. ***raise***

I need to ***charge*** my phone. [used for electrical items]

They ***loaded*** the van/truck and drove away.

Three ***injured*** people were taken to hospital.

The shop tried to sell me a ***damaged*** sofa.

In the south the farmers ***grow*** crops.

In the north the farmers mostly ***raise*** cattle.

Lecture 9
Presupposition

Presupposition

When we use a **referring expression** like ***this***, ***he*** or ***Shakespeare***, we usually assume that our **listeners can recognize which referent is intended**. In a more general way, we design our linguistic messages on the basis of large-scale assumptions about what our listeners already know. Some of these assumptions may be mistaken, of course, but mostly they're appropriate. **What a speaker assumes is true or known by a listener can be described as a presupposition**.

If someone tells you ***Your brother is waiting outside***, there is **an obvious presupposition that you have a brother**.
If you are asked ***Why did you arrive late?***, there is **a presupposition that you did arrive late**.
And if you are asked the question ***When did you stop smoking?***, there are at least **two presuppositions** involved. In asking this question, **the speaker presupposes that you used to smoke** and **that you no longer do so**.

Questions like this, with built-in presuppositions, are very useful devices for trial lawyers. If the defendant is asked by the district attorney, Okay, Mr. Buckingham, ***how fast were you going when you ran the red light?***, there is **a presupposition that Mr. Buckingham did in fact run the red light**. If he simply answers the How fast part of the question, by giving a speed, he is behaving as if the presupposition is correct.

One of the **TESTS** used to check for the presuppositions underlying sentences involves **negating a sentence** with a particular presupposition and checking if the presupposition remains true. Whether you say ***My car is a wreck*** or the negative version ***My car is not a wreck***, **the underlying presupposition (I have a car) remains true** despite the fact that the two sentences have opposite meanings.
This is called the **"constancy under negation"** test for **identifying a presupposition**.

If someone says, ***I used to regret marrying him, but I don't regret marrying him now***, **the presupposition (I married him) remains constant** even though the verb regret changes from affirmative to negative.

What is one obvious presupposition of a speaker who says:

(a) Your clock isn't working. That you have a clock.
(b) Where did he find the money? That the money is with you.
(c) We regret buying that car. That you bought the car.
(d) The king of France is bald. That he is the King of France.

The following sentences make certain presuppositions. What are they?

(a) The police ordered the minors to stop smoking. That the minors were smoking.
(b) That her pet turtle ran away made Emily very sad. That she had a pet turtle.
(c) Even Fred passed. That fred also took the exam.
(d) Lisa wants more popcorn. That Lisa already has some popcorn.
(e) Jill went into a nearby house. That Jill is inside the house.