

## Semantics & Pragmatics

**Semantics:** deals with the description of words and sentences meaning.

**Pragmatics:** concerned with the characterization of speaker's meaning factors that govern a language user's choice of utterance.

### **Pragmatics :**

- Choices the users make.
- Constraints the users encounter in using language in social situations.
- The effects their (users) use of language on other participants in communication. For example, people must not tell jokes at funerals (there is no law to do so, but it is generally not done).

### **Denotation & connotation:**

#### **Denotation :**

- Basic, essential component of meaning by literal use of a word (i.e. dictionary definition).
- e.g. (1): **needle** (basic component)

- thin
  - sharp
  - needle
  - steel
- } part of denotative meaning of

- instrument

The connotation (association) attached to the word 'needle' is (painful) whenever we encounter or hear the word.

e.g. (2): **adolescent**

- Denotative meaning → a person of a certain age.
- Connotative meaning → awkward immature, obstinate, moody.

**Connotative:** is an aspect of meaning which is based on: feeling and ideas

which arouse in the minds of

	speakers
writers	—
hearers	—
adults	—

**Semantic features**

animate	} is a procedure that is
male /female used as a means of	
human analyzing meaning .e.g.	
adult [ + human],[ <u>-animate</u> ],	

[+male] can be treated

as the basic features

involved in differentiating

the meaning of each word

in the language.

e.g., boy: (+ human, + male, -adult).

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

Add  $\Rightarrow$  (table, river, lion) each of them has [- human], we need [+ human] i.e.

**Lexical Relation**: it is a procedure of characterizing meaning of a word not

in terms of its component features, but in terms of its relationship to other words:

e.g., conceal = hide, shallow  $\times$  deep, daffodil  $\Rightarrow$  kind of flower.

**Types :**

**a. Synonymy** : two or more forms have very closed related meaning.( e.g. almost = nearly , liberty = freedom)

**b. Antonyms** : two forms with opposite meaning.(e.g. alive $\times$  dead, long  $\times$  short)

- gradable: can be used in comparative: small  $\Rightarrow$  smaller .

- non – gradable: cannot be used in comparative:  
dead × deader , more dead ; male ⇒ female ; true  
⇒ false.

e.g., That person is not dead = that person is  
alive.

- c. **Hyponymy:** a meaning of one form is included in the meaning of another, e.g., carrot ⇒ vegetable, daffodil ⇒ flower.
- d. **Homophony:** two or more different written forms have the same pronunciation: e.g., meet – meat, flour – flower / flair/, sew /saw/ so, bare – bear, pail – pale.
- e. **Homonymy:** one form (written or spoken) has two or more unrelated meanings: e.g., bank (of a river), bank (financial institution) – pupil (at school), pupil (in the eye) – bat (flying creature), bat (instrument used in sports) – race (contest of speed), race (ethnic group) – mole (dark spot in skin), mole (small animal).
- f. **Polysemy:** one form (written or spoken) having multiple meanings. e.g.:

object on top of your body.

Head object on top of a company or department.

object on top of other things (glass).

of a head

Foot — of bed

of mountain\_\_

piano —

Key — door

key board —

mystery\_\_

### Lexical & grammatical meaning:

**a) Lexical meaning:** involves lexical items which have (content) ⇒ (read, escape, school, etc.) > easy to study.

**b) Grammatical meaning:** refers mainly to the meaning of grammatical items such as (did, which, the, - ed,)

— Interrogative

Negative	—	
		—Subjunctive difficult to study
Imperative	—	
		—Subj.&obj

### Collocation & set:

**a) Collocation:** It is knowledge of words which frequently occur together, e.g., (hammer – nail, needle – thread, salt – pepper, salt-water, table – chair).

**Syntagmatic (relation)** → horizontal

It is the association of a lexical item with other lexical items:

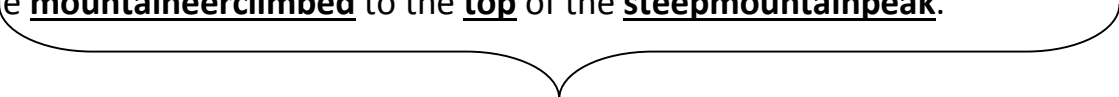
e.g.:

- i. Apple collocation is found in (eat , rosy, green, juicy , ...)
- ii. Red collocation is found in (rose , blood, tomato , ...)
- iii. Mountain collocation is found in (climb, steep , peak, stone , ...)

**b) Lexical set:** is a group of lexical items from a similar class, i.e., which seem to belong together, e.g.:

- i. Adolescent is the stage of growth between child and adult.
- ii. Cool is the degree temperature between cold and warm.
- iii. Wood is the growth age between crops and forest.

The mountaineer climbed to the top of the steep mountain peak.



## Syntagmatic relationships

(collocation)

