

Different english sense relations between words



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Dictionary. com defines a lexeme as a lexical unit in a language, as a word or base.

Further a vocabulary item. Merriam-webster. com on the other hand defines lexical as pertaining or relating to words or the vocabulary of a language as distinguished from its grammar and construction. Sense is defined as “ a meaning conveyed or intended, especially one of a set of meanings a word or phrase may have/bear. ” Relation is an existing connection; a significant association between or among things.

Lexical sense relations are therefore the relationships between meaning of words, in either their similarity or contrast in a language. It (Lexical sense relations) is used in lexical semantics to describe the relationship between terms (words), as Semantics largely deals with word meaning.

INTRODUCTION Lexical sense relations exist in the English language in different spheres. Lexical/semantic field organizes words and expressions into a system which shows their relationship within one another.

Thus, angry, sad, afraid and depressed, is a set of words in a lexical field that shows emotions. Lexical semantics therefore examines relationship among word meanings. It studies organisation of the lexicon (vocabulary:-word and expressions of a language) and how the lexical meanings of lexical items are interrelated, and its principal goal is to build a model for the structure of the lexicon by categorizing the types of relationships between words. The relationships include such broad classes as hyponymy, homonymy, polysemy, synonymy, antonymy as well as metonymy. HYPONYMY

Hyponymy involves the logical relationship of entailment; sense of one word

is included in (hypo ' under') the sense of the other. It also involves the notion of class inclusion.

For instance, the meaning of " animal" is included in the meaning of lion, goat, dog and so on. The term " animal" is the upper term known as the SUPERORDINATE while the lower term is called the HYPONYM. Superordinate TermsHyponyms Reptileslizards, geckos, snakes, chameleons, Crocodiles, Colour blue, red, green, white, yellow etc Stationery books, biros, pencils, rulers, Flower tulip, rose, hibiscus. It is also possible to talk of supra-superordinate terms.

The supra-superordinate terms cover a wider scope than the superordinate terms. In the example above, flower is a superordinate term. The same word, ' flower', may come under the supra-superordinate term, ' plant'. The word ' plant' is wider in scope than ' flower'. The word, ' vertebrate' will also serve as supra-superordinate term for the word, ' reptile. ' HOMONYMY Homonymy involves the unrelated senses of the same (phonological) word.

It is a situation in which one word-form has two or more different meanings. Derived from the Greek term ' Homois' meaning identical and ' onoma' meaning name, homonymy therefore deals with words that have same phonetic form(homophones) or orthographic form(homographs), but with different meaning. Homonymy also involves ambiguous words whose different senses are far apart from each other and are not obviously related to each other in any way. Words such as tale and tail are homonyms as there is no conceptual connection between them.

Homonymy as seen also involves word-form in pronunciation (phonemic articulation) and word structure (morphological structure) in:- a. Homophony Here two words are pronounced identically but have different written forms. They sound alike but are written differently and often have different meaning. The words can also be termed to have similar sound pattern (phonetic) but unrelated semantic meaning e.

. i. Norefusing Knowhaving an understanding ii. Ledpast tense of lead Leadof a metal b. Homography Words are spelled/have same morphological structure but might either be articulated differently/ in the same manner and also have totally different meaning e.

g. i. Bearas a noun a huge Antarctic mammal Bearas a verb to carry ii. Windmoving air Winda road with lots of bends SYNONYMY Synonymy in semantics is an inter-lexical sense relation. Synonymy is sameness of meaning. Synonymy has different aspects i.

e. Cognitive, Descriptive and Near-synonyms. Cognitive synonymsThese are synonyms that are substitutable in any grammatically declarative sentence (Evens M. W.

1988: 8, Cruse, D. A. 1986). An example of a pair of cognitive synonyms is ‘ seaman’ and ‘ sailor’. He is a Seaman and He is a Sailor are cognitively synonymous. Other pairs include ‘ mailman and postman’, ‘ buy and purchase’, ‘ hard and difficult’ Descriptive synonyms: These are synonyms that are used connotatively to express the speaker’s feelings towards what he or she describes.

For example, Job is thrifty and Job is economical. Jola is a bachelor and Jola is an unmarried man. The orange is sour and the orange is rotten. The pairs, thrifty and economical, sour and rotten, bachelor and unmarried man are descriptively synonymous. Near-synonyms These are expressions that appear similar, but not really identical in meaning because of the variations in their meaning.

Examples of near-synonymy in English are ‘ Mist and fog’, ‘ stream and brook’. For instance, ‘ stream’ and ‘ brook’ appear similar in meaning but they are not really identical. ‘ Brook’ is a small stream while ‘ stream’ is a small river. The same explanation could be offered for ‘ mist and fog’.

‘ Fog’ is a thick cloud of water from the seashore or land while ‘ mist’ is a ‘ thin fog. ’ ANTONYMY The term antonymy is used to describe oppositeness of meaning (Palmer, 1996: 94–95). It is the most useful tool of inter-lexical sense relations. Antonymy is an example of inter-lexical sense relations in the sense that, it expresses a kind of relation that exists between words or sentences that are mutually contradictory For example, WordsOpposites On Off Old Young Wide Narrow Big Small Male Female Dead Alive The relation between the words ‘ on’ and ‘ off’ is defined by their oppositeness.

The same point could be made of other pairs above. The relation of antonymy is expressed by the sentence frame, “..... is the opposite of i. e. ‘ old’ is the opposite of ‘ young.

‘ The choice of the opposite of a word may be arbitrary just as the arbitrariness of meaning in language. Charles Kreidler opines that two words or sentences are opposites if they are mutually contradictory. The idea of <https://assignbuster.com/different-english-sense-relations-between-words/>

mutual contradiction also suggests the notion of mutual exclusiveness. Two words are mutually exclusive if they cannot be obtained together simultaneously. If someone is 'dead' then the person cannot be 'alive' and vice versa.

Therefore, the two words 'dead' and 'alive' are opposites. There are different aspects of antonymy i. e. gradable antonyms or opposites, morphologically related antonyms and Binary/Non-Binary antonyms.

Gradable antonyms or opposites These are antonyms or opposites that are measure adjectives.

Examples of gradable antonyms are, 'tall and short', 'long and short', 'high and low', 'hot and cold', 'big and small' etc. Someone may say, the water is hot or the water is cold. In these two cases, 'hot' or 'cold' suggests the notion of measurement. A thermometer could be used to measure the degree of hotness or coldness of the water. Converse antonyms These are words that describe a relationship of opposite of order between two things e.

. parent: child, below: above, borrow: lend. In this relationship, one word presupposes existence of the other. Morphologically related opposites Morphologically related opposites are formed by the addition of negative prefixes like 'un-', 'in-', 'ir-' and 'im-' to the original words.

For example: Words Opposites (Prefixed Words) Friendly Unfriendly Married Unmarried Formal Informal Active Inactive Responsible Irresponsible Regular Irregular Possible Impossible Material Immaterial The inter-lexical related oppositeness of each pair is generated by the prefixes, 'un', 'in', 'ir' and 'im'

im'. Other aspects of antonyms are Binary Antonyms. Binary antonyms are opposites that are mutually exclusive (Palmer F. R 1996: 111).

The mutual exclusiveness is obtained because; both opposites cannot be obtained together. For example, pairs of words such as ' on and off', ' dead and alive', ' asleep and awake' are binary antonyms. Non-binary antonyms are opposites known as polar antonyms. They are polar antonyms because they are opposites that usually make use of relative words. The relative nature of the opposite words may generate intermediate ideas. For example, Words Opposites Intermediate ideas Old Young Neither Old nor Young Narrow Wide Neither Narrow nor Wide Bitter Sweet Neither Bitter nor Sweet The point here is that, the choice of the opposite of a word may be arbitrary in the sense that such opposites may not always take the intermediate ideas into consideration.

In this case, the opposite of the word ' old' may not be ' Young' but everything that is not old and vice versa. POLYSEMY This describes individual morphologically similar words with multiple, but relatively close semantic sense (polysemes). A word is therefore judged to be polysemous if it has two senses of the word whose meanings are related. Polysemes Bank: - A financial institution - The building where the financial institution offers its services - As a verb, ' to rely on someone/upon. ' E. g.

I'm your friend you can bank on me. Wood: - A piece of a tree. - A geographical area with lots of trees - An erection. MERONYMY This refers to words being part of a greater whole. It also refers to the semantic relation that holds between a part and the whole. Thus finger is a meronym of hand.

Hand can also be referred to as the holonym while finger a partonym of finger i. e. the hand becomes a parent of the finger, which acts as a young one. Therefore: X is a meronym of y If x is a part of y Finger is a meronym of hand Since finger is a part of hand Bird is a holonym of wing Since wing is a part of bird Conclusion From the above sense relation allegories, it is clear that words have relations of meaning with one another. Conversely, the sense of a word is the relationship a word contracts with other words in the vocabulary (lexicon) of a language.

Such relationships play to completely understand the interwoven nature of the different disciplines of linguistics. Morphology thus appreciated, is not only the study of words in a language, but goes ahead to study the relationship between different words in the large subject of sense relations.

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