

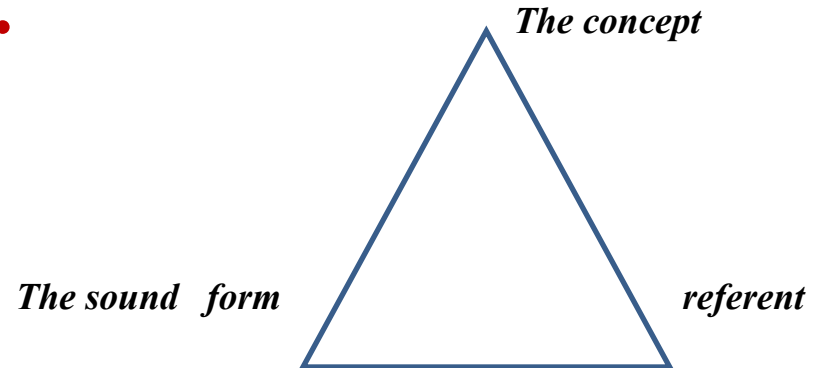
Semasiology

- *Semasiology* is a branch of lexicology, that is devoted to the study of meaning.

There are different approaches to the study of meaning:

1. Referent approach
2. Functional approach

1. *Referent approach.*



The referential approach is a combination of 3 things:

- 1) *The sound form* is connected with our concept of the word which is denoted with the referent the actual word
- 2) *The concept* is a category of human cognition. The result of abstraction and generezation.
- 3) *The meaning of the words* are different in different languages.
(*Ex: house – a building for human habitation.*)

2. Functional approach.

The functional approach maintains that the meaning of a linguistic meaning may be started only through it's relation to other linguistic units.

According to this approach the meanings of the words to move and movement are different, because this word function speech differently.

Ex: *to move* can be followed noun (to move a chair)
movement (movement of a car; slow movement)

The same is true of the different meanings of one and the same word.

Ex: *to take* (to take the book; to take the tram)

Types of meaning

1. Grammatical meaning.

Grammatical meaning is defined as an expression in speech of relationship between words.

-the meaning of plurality

Ex: *boys, girls, table*

-the tens meaning of the words

Ex: *asked, thought, worked*

2. Lexical meaning.

The word forms: *go, gone, goes, going, gone* possess different grammatical meanings.

But we find one and the same semantic component the process of movement. This is a lexical meaning of the word.

Polysemy

A word having several meanings is called ***polysemantic***. Most English words are polysemantic and it's an advantage in a language, because the number of sound combination that human speech produce is limited. That's why polysemy becomes very important in providing the means for enriching vocabulary.

Ex:

the word *fire*:

- 1) *a flame*
- 2) An instance of destructive burning- *a forest fire*.
- 3) Burning material in a stove, fire-place - *There is a fire in the next room. A camp fire*.
- 4) The shooting of guns - *to open (cease) fire*.
- 5) Strong feeling, passion, enthusiasm - *a speech lacking fire*.

Ex:

the word *bar*:

- 1) Any kind of barrier to prevent people from passing.
- 2) The profession of barrister, law e. g. *go to the Bar read for the Bar*
- 3) A room where drinks are served; e. g. *They went to the bar for a drink.*
- 4) A piece of chocolate.

Meanings 2,3,4 have no logical meaning with one another, but each of them can be associated with the first meaning.

Let's see example there is no central meaning.

Ex:

the word *dull*:

- 1) Uninteresting, monotonous, boring; e. g. *a dull book, a dull film*.
- 2) Slow in understanding, stupid; e. g. *a dull student*.
- 3) Not clear or bright; e. g. *dull weather, a dull day, a dull colour*.
- 4) Not loud or distinct; e. g. *a dull sound*.
- 5) Not sharp; e. g. *a dull knife*.
- 6) Not active; e. g. *Trade is dull*.
- 7) Seeing badly; e. g. *dull eyes*
- 8) Hearing badly; e. g. *dull ears*

Types of semantic component

Denotative component is the living semantic meaning. The denotative component expresses the conceptual content of a word.

Ex:

lonely □ *alone* *without company*

celebrated □ *well know*

to glance □ *to look*

to shiver □ *to tremble*

Connotative components give full picture of meaning.

Ex:

lonely - emotive connotation

celebrated - evaluative connotation, positive

to glare - Connotation of duration ; Emotive connotation

to glance - Connotation of duration

to shudder - Connotation of duration ; Connotation of cause
; Emotive connotation

Meaning and Context

Context is a powerful possibility preventative against misunderstanding of meaning.

We can understand the meaning of the word only in combination with other words.

Ex: adj. - *dull*

a dull book

a dull pupil

dull weather

Ex: adj. – *bright*

a) *bright colour (flower)*

b) *bright metal (gold, jewels)*

c) *bright student (pupil, boy)*

d) *bright face (smile, eyes)*

Causes of Development of New Meanings

1. *Historical factors.*

The first group of causes is traditionally termed *historical or extra-linguistic*.

All changes in society life, in culture, in knowledge lead the gaps in the vocabulary.

Now object, new concepts must be named:

1) to make a new word

2) to borrowing foreign ones.

Ex: When the first textile factories appeared in England, the old word *mill* was applied to these early industrial enterprises.

mill – textile factory

Ex:

In the theater:

The words *stalls*, *box*, *pit*, *circle* had existed for a long time before the first theatres appeared in England.

New meanings can also be developed due to linguistic factors.

In Russian language all words are borrows.

2. Linguistic factors.

Linguistically speaking, the development of new meanings, and also a complete change of meaning, may be caused through the influence of other words.

Ex: The Old English verb *steorfan* meant "*to perish*".

The verb *to die* was borrowed from the Scandinavian.

These two synonyms, which were very close in their meaning, collided, and, as a result, *to starve* gradually changed into its present meaning: "*to die (or suffer) from hunger*".