

SEMASIOLOGY



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- Semasiology (from Greek: σημασία (semasia) "signification, meaning" σημαίνω (semaino) "indicate, signify") is a discipline within linguistics concerned with the question "what does the word mean?". It is an area of Lexicology that is devoted to the study of meaning. There is no universally accepted definition of meaning.

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The term was first used by Christian Karl Reisig in 1825 in his “Vorlesungen über lateinische Sprachwissenschaft” (Lectures on Latin Linguistics) and was in use in English by 1847. Semantics replaced it in its original meaning, beginning in 1893.

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There are 2 approaches to the problem: 1) the referential approach, which formulates the essence of meaning as the interdependence between words and things or concepts they denote; 2) the functional approach, which studies the functions of a word in speech. This approach is (sometimes described as contextual) based on the analysis of various contexts.

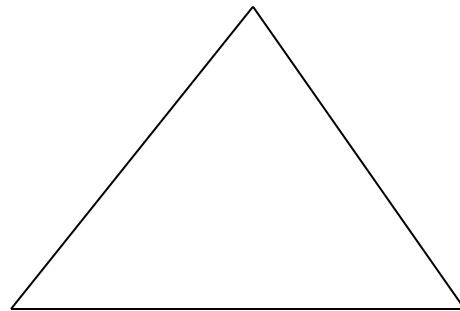
1.1. Referential Approach

3 components connected with meaning:

1. The ***sound-form*** of the linguistic sign;
2. The ***concept*** underlying the sound-form;
3. The ***referent*** – the part of aspect of reality to which the linguistic sign refers.

The referential model of meaning – **basic triangle**

concept



sound-form

referent

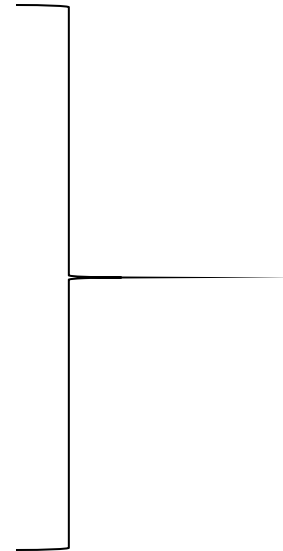


In what way does the meaning correlate with each element of the triangle and in what relation does it stand to each other?

e.g. dove - [dʌv] English

[golub'] Russian

[taube] German



Different sound-forms convey one and the same meaning

2. The **meaning** of the word is closely connected with the underlying **concept**, but it is not identical with it.
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Concept is the thought of an object.

The meanings of words are different in different languages.

concept language	'a building for human habitation'	'fixed residence of family or household'
English	house	home
Russian	ДОМ	ДОМ

3. One object can be denoted by some words of different meanings:

In speech the referent of denoted by the word



can be

cat, animal, pussy, Jerry, pet, etc.

All these words have the same referent, but different meanings.

CONCLUSION:

The meaning is not to be identical with any of the three points of the triangle, but is closely connected with them.

1.2. Functional Approach

Principle: The meaning of a linguistic unit can be studied only through its **relation to other linguistic units**.

It is based on analysis of various contexts.

to move (we move, move a chair)

movement (movement of smth, slow movement)

They occupy different positions in relation to other words.

Distribution of the word – the position of a word in relation to other words.

Context – the minimum stretch of speech necessary and sufficient to determine which of the possible meanings of a polysemantic word is used.

Meaning

a component of a word through which a concept is communicated, in this way endowing the word with the ability to denote objects, qualities, abstract notions

Types of Meaning

