

# **LEXICAL MEANING AND SEMANTIC STRUCTURE OF ENGLISH WORDS**



# LECTURE 3

- CHARACTERISTICS OF THE WORD AS THE BASIC UNIT OF LANGUAGE;
- PHONETIC, MORPHOLOGICAL AND SEMANTIC MOTIVATION OF WORDS;
- LEXICAL MEANING AND SEMANTIC STRUCTURE OF ENGLISH WORDS;
- DENOTATIVE AND CONNOTATIVE MEANING;
- CONTEXTUAL ANALYSIS;
- COMPONENTIAL ANALYSIS;
- TYPES OF SEMANTIC CHANGE.

# LITERATURE

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- <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Denotation>
- [http://www.newworldencyclopedia.org/entry/Denotation\\_and\\_connotation](http://www.newworldencyclopedia.org/entry/Denotation_and_connotation)
- [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Componential\\_analysis](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Componential_analysis)

# CHARACTERISTICS OF THE WORD AS THE BASIC UNIT OF LANGUAGE

- **The simplest word has:**
  - a sound form;
  - morphological structure;
  - different word forms;
  - different syntactic functions;
  - various meanings.

# CHARACTERISTICS OF THE WORD AS THE BASIC UNIT OF LANGUAGE

- the – boy – s – walk – ed – slow – ly – up – the – hill
- slow – ly – the – boy – s – walk – ed – up – the – hill
- up – the – hill – slow – ly – walk – ed – the – boy – s
- s – the – boy – ly – slow – ed – walk

# SEMANTIC TRIANGLE

- F. de Saussure,
- C.K. Ogden and I.A. Richards

# SEMANTIC TRIANGLE

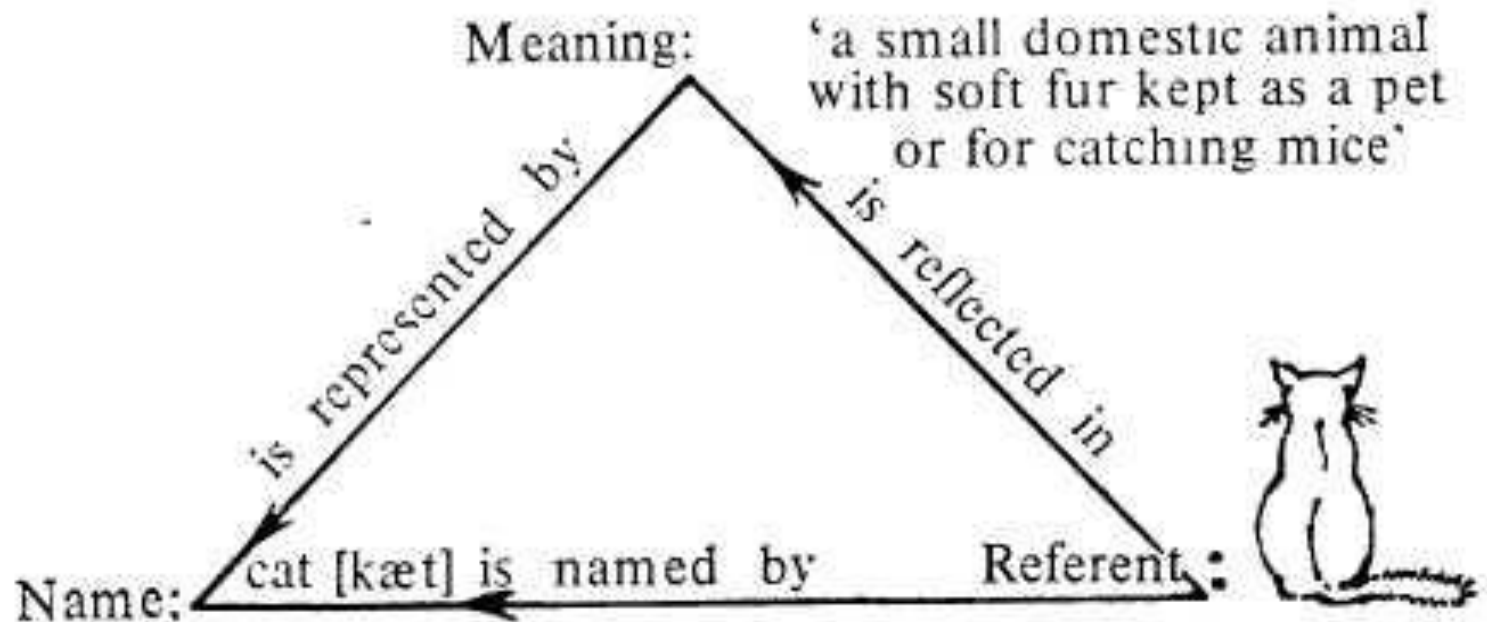


Fig. 3

# PHONETIC, MORPHOLOGICAL AND SEMANTIC MOTIVATION OF WORDS

- phonetical: *bang, buzz, cuckoo, giggle, hiss, purr, whistle,*
- morphological motivation: *ex-filmstar, ex-president, ex-wife, numb :: number; smoker*
- semantic motivation: *mouth, jacket*



# PHONETIC, MORPHOLOGICAL AND SEMANTIC MOTIVATION OF WORDS

- flap, flip, flop, flitter, flicker, flash, flare, flush
- glare, glitter, glow, glimmer
- sleet, slush, slime

## LEXICAL MEANING AND SEMANTIC STRUCTURE OF ENGLISH WORDS

- **Semasiology** - from the Greek *sēmasiā* ‘signification’  
(from *sēma* ‘sign’ *sēmantikos* ‘significant’ and *logos* ‘learning’).

# LEXICAL MEANING AND SEMANTIC STRUCTURE OF ENGLISH WORDS

- *Father :: daddy*
- **Polysemy** (Greek: *poly-*, "many" and *sêma*, "sign") is the capacity for a sign, "sign") is the capacity for a sign (such as a word, "sign") is the capacity for a sign (such as a word) to have multiple meanings (that is, multiple semes, "sign") is the capacity for a sign (such as a word) to have multiple meanings (that is, multiple semes and thus multiple senses,

# LEXICAL MEANING AND SEMANTIC STRUCTURE OF ENGLISH WORDS

- Bank
  - a financial institution
  - the building where a financial institution offers services
  - a synonym for 'rely upon' (e.g. *"I'm your friend, you can bank on me"*)
- Wood
  - a piece of a tree
  - a geographical area with many trees

## LEXICAL MEANING AND SEMANTIC STRUCTURE OF ENGLISH WORDS

*Youth* –

- an abstract uncountable noun;
- a countable personal noun 'a young man' (plural *youths*);
- a collective noun 'young men and women'.

## LEXICAL MEANING AND SEMANTIC STRUCTURE OF ENGLISH WORDS

- *“Why did they hang this picture?”*  
*“Perhaps, they could not find the artist.”*

# DENOTATIVE AND CONNOTATIVE MEANING

- **Denotation** is a translation of a sign is a translation of a sign to its meaning

# DENOTATIVE AND CONNOTATIVE MEANING

- **Connotation** – is the emotional and imaginative association surrounding a word.



# DENOTATIVE AND CONNOTATIVE MEANING



# DENOTATIVE AND CONNOTATIVE MEANING

- *stylistic connotations* horse :: steed :: nag :: gee-gee
- *emotional or affective connotation*
- *evaluative connotation*
- *intensifying connotation* magnificent, gorgeous, splendid, superb

## CONTEXTUAL ANALYSIS

- Context is a combination of an indicator or indicating minimum and the dependant, that is the word, the meaning of which is to be rendered in a given utterance  
(N. N. Amosova ).

# CONTEXTUAL ANALYSIS

- Context:  
lexical,  
syntactical,  
mixed

# COMPONENTIAL ANALYSIS

- *man :: woman, boy :: girl, bull :: cow*
- man, boy, girl, woman :: bull, cow
- man :: boy :: bull  
woman :: girl :: cow

# TYPES OF SEMANTIC CHANGE

- specialisation (narrowing);
- generalisation (widening);
- metaphor;
- metonymy;
- hyperbole;
- litotes;
- euphemisms