

AYDI EST.

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Semantics & Syntax

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أ. آلاء الصواف

Semantics & Syntax 3.1



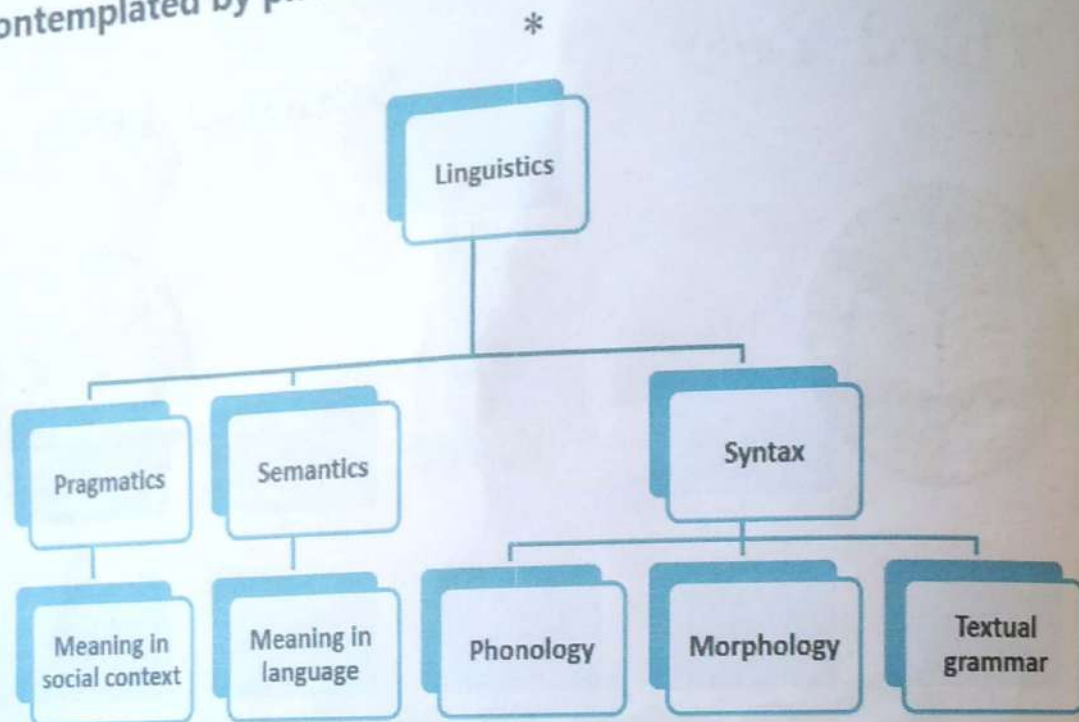
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HELLO EVERYONE!

Linguistics

In linguistics, grammar is the set of structural rules governing the composition of clauses, phrases and words in a language.

Grammar refers also to the study of such rules, and this field includes: phonology, morphology and syntax, often contemplated by phonetics, semantics and pragmatics.



WHAT IS SEMANTICS ABOUT?

Linguistics has three main branches: Syntax, Semantics and Pragmatics.

• **Syntax is the study of grammar (phonology, morphology, and textual grammar)**

☞ Phonology is about the pronunciation of words.

☞ Morphology is about the origins of words and how we get them.

☞ Textual grammar is simply grammar.

As a start we will take an example about Pragmatics and then we will move to Semantics and then Syntax.

Example:

- There is a new Korean restaurant on the 5th street.

Semantic meaning:

The speaker simply informs the listener of the new Korean restaurant on the 5th Street.

Pragmatic meaning:

The speaker is suggesting trying that new restaurant.

What is Semantics?

- Semantics is the study of meaning (Lyons 1977)
- Semantics is the study of meaning in language (Hurford & Heasley 1983)
- Semantics is the part of linguistics that is concerned with meaning (Lonber 2002)
- In linguistics, semantics is the subfield that is devoted to the study of meaning (Wikipedia)

Note: You have to memorize the previous definitions of Semantics.

Importance of semantics:

1. Clear understanding of meaning, which allows people to communicate clearly.

- *I sea my father every day.*

- *I see my father every day.*

In the first sentence, the structure is incorrect and the meaning is not correct.

In the second sentence, both structure and meaning are correct.

Another example:

I ate a sandwich.

I eight a sandwich.

The second sentence doesn't give any meaning.

2. Semantics provides the speaker with a structure to use when they need to create a meaning.

A sandwich has eaten a boy. (structure ✓, meaning ✗)

A boy has eaten a sandwich. (structure ✓, meaning ✓)

The structure of the first sentence is correct: I have a subject, a verb, and an object. But the meaning is incorrect.

The structure and the meaning of the second sentence are correct.

3. It provides an easier way to communicate without complexity.

The sky is blue = I see a blue sky =» the color of the sky is blue.

Regardless the importance of the structure, we can give the

meaning just by using two keywords (sky and blue).

4. Structural ambiguity can also give reason for the importance of semantic research.

If the sentence gives two different meanings or more, it is considered ambiguous.

e.g. **The chicken is ready to eat.**

It could mean:

The chicken (itself) is hungry and ready to eat.

The chicken is served.

Now we are talking about ambiguity (الغموض)

تكون الجملة غامضة عندما تعطي أكثر من معنى.

5. Understanding the change of the words meaning over time.

e.g. The word "nice" in the 1300s was used to mean "foolish", but now it holds a positive meaning.

تختلف معاني بعض الكلمات بمرور الوقت في كل اللغات.

Two types of meaning:

- Conceptual (denotative) meaning – literal meaning or the exact meaning
المعنى الحرفي

The conceptual meaning is found in the dictionary.

e.g. **needle** could be literally translated to: thin, sharp metallic instrument.

- **Associative** (connotative) meaning. المعنى الضمني

People might have different associations or connotations

to words, such as: needle, the associate it with pain, illness, blood, threads, syringes and drugs.

Another example is the word "countryside": its associative meaning is related to being peaceful, trees, fresh air, agriculture, etc. The conceptual meaning is the area outside the city.

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• **Nurse:**

Conceptual meaning:

The person who takes care of patients.

Associative meaning:

Compassionate, considerate, etc.

*

Teacher:

Conceptual meaning:

The person who teaches students.

Associative meaning:

Inspirational person, sacrificing person, university, school, etc.

*

• **Doctor:**

Conceptual meaning:

A person who treats sick people.

Associative meaning:

Hospital, clinic, medicine, surgery.

*

• **Water:**

Conceptual meaning:

Liquid

Associative meaning:

Life, sea, river, source of life, nature, trees, etc.

*

Those connotations of a word could be positive, negative or neutral, and can also be cultural or personal.

كل ما يرتبط بكلمة معينة قد يكون ايجابياً أو سلبياً أو حيادياً. كلمة (surgery) تعطي معنى سلبي، بينما كلمة (merciful) تعطي معنى إيجابي.

قد يكون المعنى ثقافي أو شخصي. كلمة طبيب لها معنى ثقافي مهم في مجتمعنا بينما ينظر لبقية الاختصاصات على أنها ذات مستوى أقل من الطب. بالنسبة للمعنى الشخصي مثلاً كلمة (teaching) قد تحمل معنى سلبي لمن يكره التدريس ومعنى إيجابي لمن يحبه. يختلف المعنى الشخصي من شخص لآخر ويختلف المعنى الثقافي بين ثقافة وأخرى.

Conceptual meaning:

▪ Blood: red liquid that flows through our bodies.

▪ Pig: a type of animal.

Associative meaning:

▪ Blood: accidents, murder.

▪ Pig: dirty, disgusting.

Examples:

- She laid the table for dinner.

- طاولة الطعام - المائدة

- He drew a table that includes the data.

- جدول

- The delegations had a round-table discussion.

طاولة المفاوضات

The table is made of steel and wood.

طاولة

كلمة (table) تعني طاولة وتعني جدول. يختلف معناها حسب السياق.

Thank You



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مؤسسة العائدي للخدمات الطلابية

Group:

مكتبة العائدي - التعليم المفتوح - قسم الترجمة



•: مكتبة العائدي: المزة- نفق الآداب

•: هاتف: 011 2119889

•: موبايل + واتساب: 0941 322227



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