

Semester Final Examination
B.A.in English
Course Title: Introduction to Linguistics
Course Code: ENG-202

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Ans to the Q.no 1(a)

Semantic Role:

Definition: A semantic role is the underlying relationship that a participant has with the main verb in a clause. Semantic role is the actual role a participant plays in some real or imagined situation, apart from the linguistic encoding of those situations.

Semantics is the study of the meaning of words, phrases and sentences. In semantic analysis, there is always an attempt to focus on what the words conventionally mean, rather than on what an individual speaker (like George Carlin) might want them to mean on a particular occasion. This technical approach is concerned with objective or general meaning and avoids trying to account for subjective or local meaning. Linguistic semantics deals with the conventional meaning conveyed by the use of words, phrases and sentences of a language.

[Agent,theme,Instrument,experiencer,Location, source and goal]

Agent: The 'doer' or instigator of the action denoted by the predicate.

Theme: The entity that is moved by the action or event denoted by the predicate.

Experiencer: The living entity that experiences the action or event denoted by the predicate.

Goal: The location or entity in the direction of which something moves.

Source: The location or entity from which something moves

Location: The specification of the place where the action or event denoted by the predicate is situated.

Example:

Theme: Entity undergoing the effect of some action.

(Mary fell over)

Agent: Instigator of some action.

(John killed Harry)

Experiencer: Entity experiencing some psychological state.

(John felt happy)

Goal: Entity towards which something moves.

(John went home)

Ans to the Q.no 1(b)

Grammar: the structure and system of a language, usually considered to consist of syntax and morphology.

Or

Grammar is the set of rules which help us to understand language. Grammar is the structural foundation of our ability to express ourselves. The more we are aware of how it works, the more we can monitor the meaning and effectiveness of the way we and others use language.

However long there have been rules of grammar, there have been hypotheses about what compels it work and how to order it. For instance, American language specialist

Noam Chomsky placed the hypothesis of general grammar. It says that normal principles direct all language.

In his view, people have a natural information on language that illuminates those guidelines. That, he contemplated, is the reason kids can get on complex grammar without unequivocal information on the standards. Be that as it may, grammarians actually banter about whether this hypothesis turns out as expected.

There are likewise prescriptive and descriptive grammar types:

1. Prescriptive grammar is the arrangement of rules individuals ought to adhere to while utilizing the English language.

2. Descriptive grammar is the way we portray the manner in which individuals are utilizing language.

#Prescriptive grammar:

a. Approach to grammar that is concerned with establishing norms of correct and incorrect usage and formulating rules based on these norms to be followed by users of the language

b. Takes the principle that the language usage can vary according to varied speakers. Thus it does not consider what is correct.

c. There are specified and standard set of grammar rules.

#Descriptive grammar:

a. Approach to grammar that is concerned with describing the use of language by native or non-native speakers without reference to proposed norms of correctness or advocacy rules based on such norms.

b. Takes the principle that the long existed grammar rules created by the native speakers and the correct and the variation are incorrect.

c. Rules are made according to the daily usage of the language by the speaker.

For example, if a person says; "He and me were arguing about the presentation". A descriptive grammarian will explain this sentence as grammatical while a prescriptive grammarian will say this sentence is incorrect since it has violated the standard grammar rules with the incorrect usage of 'me' with "He" (where it should be He and I).

Therefore, prescriptive grammar attempts to establish the standard in the language

Conclusion

Descriptive and prescriptive grammar are two ways to deal with grammar in a language. While descriptive grammar is an empirical investigation of the utilization of language by speakers, descriptive grammar endeavors to force specific regularizing grammar rules on the speakers to arrive at the acknowledged norm of that language.

This is the principal distinction among descriptive and prescriptive grammar.

Ans to the Q.no 1(c)

In semantics, associative meaning refers to the particular qualities or characteristics beyond the denotative meaning that people commonly think of (correctly or incorrectly) in relation to a word or phrase. Also known as expressive meaning and stylistic meaning.

#Conceptual Meaning

Conceptual meaning refers to the logical sense of the utterance and is recognizable as a basic component of grammatical competence. It is alternatively described as the cognitive or the denotative meaning (denotation) (see Lyons 1981). This is the basic or universal meaning and can be represented at the lexical level, as well as that of the clause or simple sentence.

At the lexical level, conceptual meaning is represented as a set of distinctive features.

The relevant set of distinctive features, otherwise described as semes or sememes, depends on a given semantic field. The operant features for 'people' lexemes are [human], [adult], [male]. The application of these features uses a binary notation whereby the value of a feature is specified as either positive [+], negative [-] or neutral [□]. Consider these Kiswahili meanings: mtu 'person', mtoto 'child', mzee 'elderly person', kijana 'youth', mwanamke 'woman', mwanamume 'man', mvulana 'boy', msichana 'girl'.

mtu → [+ human], [□ adult], [□ male]

mtoto → [+ human], [- adult], [□ male]

mzee → [+ human], [+ adult], [□ male]

#Associative Meaning

Associative meaning describes a composite of six modes of language usage, which draw on certain mental connections. Such connections are based on the contiguities of real-world experience rather than the linguistic context. The ensuing discussion focuses on four types of associative meaning, selected on account of specifically distinctive communicative properties:

1. connotative meaning;
2. social meaning;
3. affective meaning;
4. collocative meaning.

1. Connotative Meaning

Connotation is the real-world value a speaker associates with an expression. Real-world value is perceived in terms of tacit socio-cultural principles, norms and rules.

2. Social Meaning

Social meaning refers to the use of language to establish and regulate social relations and to maintain social roles. This type of language use is alternatively described as social or phatic communication.

3. Affective Meaning

In a manner comparable to social meaning affective meaning is only indirectly related to the conceptual representation. Affective meaning is more directly a reflection of the speaker's personal attitude or feelings towards the listener or the target of the utterance. Such feelings or attitudes are usually negative or insincere in nature. They are normally expressed through such forms of language use as insults, flattery, hyperbole or sarcasm.

4. Collocative Meaning

Collocation is an umbrella term for the various instances of co-occurrence of meaning. It refers to the sense a lexeme may acquire on account of the meanings of lexemes that tend to co-occur in similar environments and covers all utterances which are encoded and decoded as unitary wholes of expressions. The latter extend from lexical associations to the various types of language sayings.

Conclusion

The foregoing discussion has addressed meaning typology from the functional perspective of meaning as use. This approach entails a broad view of linguistic meaning, which integrates semantics and pragmatics. Of particular relevance to the discussion are the distinctive properties of conceptual and associative meaning. From these properties, two salient observations are pertinent.

Ans to the Q.no 3(a)

From english wikipedia I can say-In linguistics,prosody is concerned with elements of speech that are not individual phonetic segments (vowel and consonants)but are properties of syllables and larger units of speech,including linguistic function such as intonation,stress and rhythm. Such elements are known as suprasegmentals.

In the study of prosodic aspects of speech, it is usual to distinguish between auditory measures (subjective impressions produced in the mind of the listener) and objective measures (physical properties of the sound wave and physiological characteristics of articulation that may be measured objectively). Auditory (subjective) and objective (acoustic and articulatory) measures of prosody do not correspond in a linear way. Most studies of prosody have been based on auditory analysis using auditory scales.

There is no agreed number of prosodic variables. In auditory terms, the major variables are:

- *the pitch of the voice (varying between low and high)
- *length of sounds (varying between short and long)
- *loudness, or prominence (varying between soft and loud)
- *timbre or voice quality (quality of sound)
- *fundamental frequency (measured in hertz, or cycles per second)
- *duration (measured in time units such as milliseconds or seconds)
- *intensity, or sound pressure level (measured in decibels)
- *spectral characteristics (distribution of energy at different parts of the audible frequency range)

Different combinations of these variables are exploited in the linguistic functions of intonation and stress, as well as other prosodic features such as rhythm and tempo. Additional prosodic variables have been studied, including voice quality and pausing. The behavior of the prosodic variables can be studied either as contours across the prosodic unit or by the behavior of boundaries.

Ans to the Q.no 3(b)

Syntactic ambiguity:

In English grammar, syntactic ambiguity (also called structural ambiguity or grammatical ambiguity) is the presence of two or more possible meanings within a single sentence or sequence of words, as opposed to lexical ambiguity, which is the presence of two or more possible meanings within a single word. The intended meaning of a syntactically ambiguous phrase can generally—although not always—be determined by the context of

its use.

The ambiguity that arises because people have different understandings of the syntactic structure in a sentence is called syntactic ambiguity. At the syntactic level, the study of ambiguity is mainly based on the theoretical basis of transformational generative grammar. According to the transformational generative grammar theory, each sentence has a surface structure and a deep structure. The surface structure refers to the relationship between the various components of the sentence that is actually formed, and the linear arrangement of these components results in the sentence. The deep structure describes the grammatical relationships that are the basis of the surface structure, and these grammatical relationships cannot be directly seen from the surface structure.

The same thing is found in syntax. Consider the following example:

(1) I saw someone with a telescope.

This has two possible interpretations:

*I was using a telescope, and I saw someone.

*I saw someone, and that person had a telescope.

(2) Call me a Taxi

This has two possible meanings,

*Someone wanting a taxi to someone else.

*Someone influences to call him a taxi.

(3) Sumona got the bath ready for her daughter wearing a pink tutu.

Was Sumona wearing the tutu? Or was her daughter?

Conclusion:

In short, when encountering such ambiguous sentences, in addition to analyzing the specific context, we should also make logical judgments. To make correct logical judgments, we must have a wide range of knowledge other than language. All in all, ambiguity is a more complicated issue, which deserves to be taken seriously.

Analyzing ambiguity can help us better understand and use language.