ANTH276: INTRODUCTION TO LINGUISTIC ANTHROPOLOGY: THE NATURE OF LANGUAGE

Handout 10: Semantics—Meaning in Language

June 16, 2004 (Chienjer Charles Lin)

1. Theories of Meaning:
   (a) Dictionary Definitions
   (b) Mental images
   (c) Meaning and reference
   (d) Meaning and truth conditions
   (e) presupposition (e.g. Santa Claus is asleep presupposes that Santa Claus exists.)
   (f) Meaning and language use

2. Lexical Semantics—some important semantic relationships:
   (a) synonymy
   (b) antonymy
     ● complementary / contradictory (married/unmarried)
     ● relational opposites / contraries (married/bachelor, over/under)
     ● scalar antonyms / gradable pairs (good/bad, hot/cold)
   (c) meronymy (part-whole relationship)
   (d) hyponymy (poodle/dog)
   (e) troponymy (like/love, care for)

   (a) an online lexical reference system whose design is inspired by current psycholinguistic theories of human lexical memory. English nouns, verbs, adjectives and adverbs are organized into synonym sets, each representing one underlying lexical concept. Different relations link the synonym sets.
   (b) developed by the Cognitive Science Laboratory at Princeton University under the direction of Professor George A. Miller (Principal Investigator).

WordNet 2.0 Search
Overview for "like"
The verb "like" has 5 senses in WordNet.
1. wish, care, like -- (prefer or wish to do something; "Do you care to try this dish?"; "Would you like to come along to the movies?")
2. like -- (find enjoyable or agreeable; "I like jogging"; "She likes to read Russian novels")
3. like -- (be fond of; "I like my nephews")
4. like -- (feel about or towards; consider, evaluate, or regard; "How did you like the President's speech last night?")
5. like -- (want to have; "I'd like a beer now!")
The adjective "like" has 4 senses in WordNet.
1. like (vs. unlike), similar -- (resembling or similar; having the same or some of the same characteristics; often used in combination; "suits of like design"; "a limited circle of like minds"; "members of the cat family have like dispositions"; "as like as two peas in a pod"; "doglike devotion"; "a dreamlike quality")
2. like (vs. unlike), equal, equivalent, same -- (equal in amount or value; "like amounts"; "equivalent amounts"; "the same amount"; "gave one six blows and the other a like number"; "an equal number"; "the same number")
3. alike(predicate) (vs. unalike), similar, like -- (having the same or similar characteristics; "all politicians are like"; "they looked utterly alike"; "friends are generally alike in background and taste")
4. comparable, corresponding, like -- (conforming in every respect; "boxes with corresponding dimensions"; "the like period of the preceding year")
4. Semantic features and componential analysis
5. **compositionality** in semantic calculation
6. Cognitive Semantics—the turning of Semantics to language and conceptualization
   
   (a) Color terms (Berlin & Kay)
   (b) Metaphors (Lakoff & Johnson)

**COLOR**

1. All of the colors we see are a combination of six basic colors: red, yellow, green, blue, white, and black.
2. Perceivable colors vary in three dimensions: hue, saturation, and brightness.
3. Berlin and Kay's findings are summarized on page 234 of LF.
4. The controversy between universalists (Berlin & Kay) and relativists (Wierzbicka).

**METAPHOR**

1. Metaphor (not as a poetic figurative speech but) as used in people's daily speech.
2. What is metaphor?
   
   i. Using a more concrete concept to describe an abstract concept
   ii. Using the **Source Domain** (SD) to describe the **Target Domain** (TD)
   iii. Therefore, it is a mapping between SD and TD.
   iv. The mappings are systematic.

![Source Domain](chart1)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>concrete</th>
<th>abstract</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

3. Some examples of **conceptual metaphors**:
   
   A. TIME is MONEY. (p.7-8 of Metaphors We Live By)
   B. IDEAS are OBJECTS. (p.10-11)
      
      LINGUISTIC EXPRESSIONS are CONTAINERS.
      COMMUNICATION is SENDING.
   C. Orientational Metaphors & experiential bases(Ch4):
      
      i. HAPPY IS UP; SAD IS DOWN.
      ii. CONSCIOUS IS UP; UNCONSCIOUS IS DOWN.
      iii. HEALTH AND LIFE ARE UP; SICKNESS AND DEATH ARE DOWN.
iv. HAVING CONTROL OR FORCE IS UP; BEING SUBJECT TO CONTROL OR FORCE IS DOWN.
v. MORE IS UP; LESS IS DOWN.
vi. FORSEEABLE FUTURE EVENTS ARE UP.
vii. HIGH STATUS IS UP; LOW STATUS IS DOWN.
viii. GOOD IS UP; BAD IS DOWN.
ix. VALUE IS UP; DEPRAVITY IS DOWN.
x. RATIONAL IS UP; EMOTIONAL IS DOWN.

D. IDEAS ARE FOOD (48)
IDEAS ARE PEOPLE
IDEAS ARE PLANTS
IDEAS ARE COMMODITIES

E. LOVE IS MADNESS
LOVE IS WAR

F. SEEING IS TOUCHING

Table 1. Comparison of metaphors for LOVE and metaphors for LUST based on Kovecses (2000).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Domain Involved</th>
<th>LOVE IS ...</th>
<th>LUST IS ...</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Food</td>
<td>A NUTRIENT</td>
<td>HUNGER</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>APPETIZING FOOD (object)</td>
<td>HUNGER</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Something contained</td>
<td>A FLUID IN A CONTAINER</td>
<td>PRESSURE INSIDE A CONTAINER</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Heat</td>
<td>FIRE</td>
<td>HEAT</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Force</td>
<td>A NATURAL FORCE</td>
<td>A NATURAL FORCE</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>A PHYSICAL FORCE</td>
<td>A PHYSICAL FORCE</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>--</td>
<td>A FUNCTIONING MACHINE</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>(a lustful person)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Animal</td>
<td>A CAPTIVE ANIMAL</td>
<td>A VICEOUS ANIMAL</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Combat/War/Game</td>
<td>AN OPPONENT</td>
<td>-- !</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>A SOCIAL SUPERIOR</td>
<td>A SOCIAL SUPERIOR</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>WAR</td>
<td>WAR</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>SPORT/A GAME</td>
<td>A GAME</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Illness</td>
<td>A DISEASE/AN ILLNESS</td>
<td>-- !</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>INSANITY</td>
<td>INSANITY</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>A RAPTURE/A HIGH</td>
<td>-- !</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Economic exchange</td>
<td>AN ECONOMIC EXCHANGE</td>
<td>--</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Journey</td>
<td>A JOURNEY</td>
<td>--</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unity</td>
<td>A UNITY OF PARTS</td>
<td>--</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>CLOSENES</td>
<td>--</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>A BOND</td>
<td>--</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Magic/Religion/mythology</td>
<td>MAGIC</td>
<td>-- ! (chemicals?)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>A DEITY (object)</td>
<td>-- !</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Valuable property</td>
<td>A SMALL CHILD (object)</td>
<td>-- !</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>A VALUABLE OBJECT (object)</td>
<td>--</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>A POSSESSED OBJECT (object)</td>
<td>--</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Now, let's talk about Lakoff's articles on metaphor and war.