

**1. Introduction:**

- **Semantics** is the study of the meaning of words and sentences.
- The meaning comes from words and the structure of the sentence.
- E.g.  
Sentence 1: The cat followed the dog.  
Sentence 2: The dog followed the cat.  
Even though both sentences have the same words, they have different structures.  
In sentence 1, the cat is following the dog.  
In sentence 2, the dog is following the cat.
- The doer of the action is usually the subject.
- The meaning of a sentence can be ambiguous.
- E.g. I caught the dog with the leash.  
Meaning 1: I used a leash to catch the dog.  
Meaning 2: I caught the dog that had a leash on it.

**2. Types of Ambiguity:**

- Lexical Ambiguity
- Morphological Ambiguity
- Syntactic/Structural Ambiguity

**3. Lexical Ambiguity:**

- The ambiguity comes from the meaning of the word(s).
- E.g. I brought a bat to the game.  
Meaning 1: I brought the animal bat to the game.  
Meaning 2: I brought a sports bat to the game.  
The ambiguity comes from the meaning of the word "bat."
- E.g. Stolen painting found by tree.  
Meaning 1: Tree found the stolen painting.  
Meaning 2: The painting was found beside a tree.  
The ambiguity comes from the word "tree." Tree could be a person's name, or it could be a tree.

**4. Morphological Ambiguity:**

- The ambiguity comes from the word(s).
- E.g. This bed is unfoldable.  
Meaning 1: The bed cannot be folded.  
Meaning 2: The bed can be unfolded.  
The ambiguity comes from the word "unfolded."
- The affixes attach differently.

**5. Syntactic/Structural Ambiguity:**

- The ambiguity comes from the structure of the sentence.
- E.g. I caught the dog with the leash.  
Meaning 1: I used a leash to catch the dog.  
[I][Caught the dog with the leash]  
Meaning 2: I caught the dog that had a leash on it.  
[I][Caught][The dog with the leash]  
The ambiguity comes from where the preposition is attached to.
- The preposition(s) attach in different places.

6. **Lexical Semantics:**

- **Lexical** means related to words.
- Lexical semantics is the meaning of words.
- **Types of lexical semantics:**
  1. Polysemy
  2. Homonymy
  3. Homophones
  4. Homograph
  5. Antonyms
  6. Synonyms
  7. Phantonyms:
  8. Semantic Shift:

7. **Polysemy:**

- **Polysemy:** A word has more than 1 meaning and those meanings are related.
- E.g. lip  
Meaning 1: The body part.  
Meaning 2: The edge of something.
- E.g. chair  
Meaning 1: A piece of furniture we sit on.  
Meaning 2: The head of an organization.
- Bat is NOT an example of polysemy.
- With polysemy, if you know one of the word's meanings, you can guess the other meaning(s).

8. **Homonymy:**

- **Homo** means same.
- **Homonymy:** A word that has more than 1 meaning and those meanings are unrelated.
- E.g. Bat  
Meaning 1: The animal bat.  
Meaning 2: The sports bat.
- E.g. Pen  
Meaning 1: A writing utensil.  
Meaning 2: An enclosure.

9. **Homophones:**

- **Phone** means sounds.
- **Homophone:** A word with the same sound but have different spellings.
- E.g. Bough and Bow.
- E.g. Flour and Flower
- E.g. Dear and Deer

10. **Homograph:**

- **Graph** means writing.
- **Homograph:** A word with the same spelling, but different pronunciation.  
E.g. Lead, Bow, Tear

### **11. Antonyms:**

- Two words that have opposite meaning.
- There are 3 types of antonyms.
  1. **Gradable:**

These words have different degrees and can be attached to intensifiers/degree words.

E.g. Hot/Cold (boiling/freezing, super hot/super cold)

E.g. Tall/Short (very tall/very short, not tall/not short)
  2. **Complementary:**

These words cannot be both at the same time. It's either this one or the other.

There is no between. You can't use degree adverbs.

E.g. Dead/Alive (You can't be both dead and alive at the same time.)

E.g. Taken/Single
  3. **Relational:**

These words have a 2-sided relationship.

E.g. Teacher/Student

E.g. Borrow/Lend

E.g. Lawyer/Client

E.g. Parent/Child

E.g. Doctor/Patient

### **12. Synonyms:**

- Two words that have similar meaning.
- There are 3 types of synonyms.
  1. **Dialectal Variation:**

These words have similar meaning, but it's spoken in different places.

In England, they use the word "lift" while in Canada, we use the word "elevator." Both have similar meaning, but it's spoken in different places.

E.g. Couch and Sofa

E.g. Lift and Elevator

E.g. Apartment and Flat
  2. **Register/Style:**

Recall that register/style means the level of formality. So these words have similar meaning, but it depends on the context (formal or informal). To a professor, you would say "hello", but to a friend, you would say "hi."

E.g. Ride and Car

E.g. Hi and Hello
  3. **Euphemism:**

Euphemism is when you replace a word with a politer word. This goes back to register/style.

E.g. Washroom and Loo and Toilet

E.g. Die and Passed Away

**13. Phantonims:**

- **Phantonims:** Words that seem to mean one thing, but mean something else.
- E.g. Fulsome (You may think it means full, but it means disgusting.)
- E.g. Enervated (You may think it means energized, but it means weakened.)
- E.g. Presently (You may think it means now, but it means later.)

**14. Semantic Shift:**

- **Semantic Shift:** Words that have their meanings changed over time.
- There are 4 types of semantic shift:
  1. **Narrowing:** Words that had a broader meaning, but now has a specific meaning.  
E.g. Hound (It used to refer to all dogs, but now it refers to a specific type of dog.)
  2. **Broadening:** Words that had a specific meaning, but now has a broader meaning.  
E.g. Bird (It used to mean young birds only, now it means all birds.)
  3. **Amelioration:** Words that had a negative meaning, but now has a more positive meaning.  
E.g. Nice (It used to mean awful, but now means nice.)
  4. **Pejoration:** Words that had a positive meaning, but now has a more negative meaning.  
E.g. Silly (It used to mean nice, but now means foolish.)  
E.g. Gaudy (It used to mean pious, but now means awful.)

**15. Sentence Semantics:**

- This looks at the relationship between sentences.
- Sentences may include the meaning of other sentences.
- There are 3 types of sentence semantics:
  1. **Entailment:** When the truth of a sentence guarantees the truth of another sentence.  
E.g. The man was killed. → Entails → The man is dead.  
E.g. My brother is older than me. → Entails → I have a brother.
  2. **Contradiction:** When one sentence is true, another sentence must be false.  
E.g. I am single. → Contradicts → I am taken.
  3. **Paraphrase:** Two sentences that have the same meaning are said to be paraphrases of each other.  
E.g. Joe kissed Mary. → Paraphrases → Mary was kissed by Joe.