SENSE RELATIONS I
SYNONYMY & ANTONYMY

1. SYNONYMY
   • refers to ‘sameness of m.’; s. relation in which different l. forms have the ?same? m.
   • synonymy=symmetric hyponymy
     e.g.all children are kids-all kids are children
   • English-rich in synonyms (2 vocabulary sources) e.g.brotherly-fraternal; buy purchase; world-universe

2. Absolute synonyms?
   • Are there ‘real’ synonyms (words with exactly the same m.)?
     • 3 criteria for absolute synonymy:
       1. synonyms are absolute s. if and only if all their m. are identical
       2. synonyms are absolute s. if and only if they are synonymous in all contexts
       3. synonyms are absolute s. if and only if they are identical in all relevant dimensions of m.

3. Partial synonymy
   e.g. radio-wireless old-fashioned & dialectal, not interchangeable in all contexts
   e.g. airport-airfield-airport
   e.g. pneumonia-inflammation of the lungs
   • collocational range-set of contexts in which a certain term may be used
     I live in a big/large house.
     I will tell my big/large sister.
     This is a big/large mistake.

4. 5 ways in which s. can differ
   1. dialectal difference: fall-autumn
   2. stylistic difference: gentleman-man-chap; pass away-die-kick the bucket-pop off
   3. difference in emotive (evaluative)m.: hide-conceal; politician-statesman
   4. collocational restriction: rancid only with butter and bacon
   5. loose synonymy-closeness and overlap in m. (used by the dictionary-maker): mature-adult, ripe, perfect, full

5. Testing synonymy
   1. substitution (some say that total synonyms are interchangeable in all possible environments)- but some words are interchangeable only in certain environments (deep and profound with sympathy, but only deep with water)
   • impracticable to prove that two items are absolute synonyms by this definition, because that would mean checking their relations in all conceivable contexts.
   2. investigation of antonyms: superficial is contrasted with both deep and profound, but shallow only with deep. Synonyms are often said to differ only in their CONNOTATIONS.

6. 2 basic types of synonymy
   1. context-dependent synonymy- two items are synonymous in a particular context, e.g.
     dog and bitch in My____ has just had pups; buy and get in I’ll go to the shop and_____ some bread. But, this is not an argument for synonymy, but rather hyponymy (one term is more specific than the other). The fact that information can be guessed from the context doesn’t affect the meaning (the book and the red book could be contextual synonyms, but do not have the same meaning).
   2. type of synonymy found between bull and male adult bovine animal. The test of interchangeability rules them out as synonyms, as it is not said There is a male adult bovine animal in the field. This is not a natural linguistic phenomenon, it is created by the lexicographer for the purposes of definition and paraphrase.

7. 2. ANTONYMY
   • refers to ‘oppositeness of m.’; antonyms-words opposite in m.
   • regular and natural feature of l. (different status from that of synonymy)
   • refers to paradigmatic opposition (Trier:every uttered word evokes its opposite in the mind of the speaker or listener during the articulation)
• no precise use of the term: high-low; buy-sell; male-female; arrive-depart; left-right; front-back

• binary opposition -most important principle shaping l. structure. Its most obvious manifestation in lexis is antonymy
• Antonyms-exist universally, but even they reflect speaker’s culture (left-right; north-south-east-west distinction)

10 Basic types of oppositeness
1. GRADED (GRADABLE) A.-gradation includes comparison; when comparing 2 or more objects in terms of possessing a certain quality (adj) we question the possession of a quality in degrees
wide-narrow; old-young; big-small
Sapir: use of a graded adj always includes gradation (explicitly or implicitly)
e.g. Our house is big (ger than the normal house)

comparative forms of adj (in –er or with more) are explicitly graded (preceeded linguistically by simpler forms, but preceed them logically)
Gradation against different norms: wide with stripe on a dress or road
paradox: small elephant bigger than a big mouse

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2. UNGRADABLE (COMPLEMENTARY) ANTONYMY
members are in complementary distribution:
male-female; married-single; alive-dead
to say that sth. is not the one is to say it is the other
When ungraded a. are used as predicative e.:
1. predication of one element implies the predication of the negation of the other
2. predication of the negation of either implies the predication of the other
X is female implies X is not male
X is not female implies X is male

When graded a. are used as predicative e.:
1. predication of one element implies the predication of the negation of the other
X is hot implies X is not cold
X is cold implies X is not hot
! X is not hot doesn’t imply X is cold!

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16 Morphological relatedness
• morph. unrelated a.-most frequent: good-bad; high-low; beautiful-ugly; big-small; old-young
• outnumbered by morph. related a.: married-unmarried; friendly-unfriendly
• most morph. unrelated a. are graded and those morph. related are ungraded
• married-unmarried/single; friendly- unfriendly/hostile

• no logical necessity for l. to have morph. unrelated antonymy
• they amplify the distinction between two poles; Sapir: contrasting qualities are felt to be absolute
• Total lexicalization of polarized opposites necessarily includes morph. unrelatedness
• morph. relatedness-between grammaticalisation and lexicalisation: good-bad vs friendly-unfriendly

• Explicit gradation of ungraded a.: Is X still alive then? Very much so.

3. SYMMETRICALLY REVERSIBLE A.-those to which the relationship ‘more and less’ cannot be applied

• Different from ungradable: if you’re not alive, you must be dead; but if you’re not brilliant, you don’t have to be stupid

• Different fromgradable: more and less can’t be applied

4. RELATIONAL OPPOSITES-a different kind of ‘opposite’ with pairs of words which exhibit the reversal of a relationship between items.

• buy/sell, husband/wife If John sells to Fred, Fred buys from John; if Bill is Mary’s husband, Mary is Bill’s wife.
• give/receive

• Verbs that form pairs in this way: buy/sell, lend/borrow, rent/let, own/belong to,

• Nouns that form pairs in this way: husband/wife, fiancé/fiancée, parent/child,

• debtor/creditor, teacher/pupil.

• A number of terms referring to spatial position: above/below, in front of /behind, north of/south of.

• In grammar, active and passive exhibit relational opposition (if Tom hits Harry, Harry is hit by Tom).

Kinship terms-interesting in the discussion of relational opposites- many of them indicate not only the relationship, but the sex of the peson concerned (father is the male parent, daughter is a female child). This blocks reversibility (to say that John is Sam’s father doesn’t entail that Sam is John’s son. Sam could be his daughter). So we have pairs indicating the same relationship, but a different sex: father/mother, son/daughter, uncle/aunt, nephew/niece.

Some terms are not strictly related as relational opposites, but indicate a temporal relationship, e.g. ask/reply; offer/accept. Reply and accept ‘presuppose’ that there has been an act of asking or giving; this is a natural result of the temporal relationship.

5. DIRECTIONAL, ORTOGONAL & ANTIPODAL OPPOSITION
• Directional opposition: up-down; arrive-depart; come-go
• 2 kinds of opposition within the set: north-south-east-west

Each is in ortogonal opposition with the other two: north with east and west; east with south and north and antipodally one with the other: north and south; east and west

6. NON-BINARY CONTRASTS
• Relationship between {Sunday, Monday, Tuesday..} described as incompatibility

Trier: excellent, good, average, fair; poor (student perf.)-set of incompatible and ungradable lexemes whose m. are determined by their position in the set

Military terms: field marshal, general, corporal, private

• Cyclic sets: seasons, days of the week
• no extreme points (as with field marshal-private); culturally determined
  not antonymic, but subantonymic sets
• true prototypical antonyms: direct oppositions of the ungradable type
• graded sets=entering cultural spheres