1. **PROTOTYPE THEORY**

**CATEGORIZATION**

2. **Prototype**
   - prototype of a predicate is an object held to be very typical of the kind of object which can be referred to by an expression containing the predicate
   - prototype- most typical member of a category
   - e.g. prototype of the predicate *man*: man of medium height and average built, btw. 30 and 50 years old with no distinctive features or defects (in certain parts of the world)
   - a dwarf or a muscular body-builder cannot be a prototype of the predicate *man*

3. **Categorization**
   - E. Rosch- psychologist, one of the founders of c. semantics, introduced the idea of a PROTOTYPE
   - crucial research in understanding categories
   - CATEGORY- one knowledge structure
   - contrast btw. classical and prototypical c.
   - classical c.-Aristotle, applicable to Trier’s semantic field theory

4. **Aristotelian categories**
   1. categories are defined in terms of a conjunction of necessary and sufficient features implies that m. can be absolutely determined
      - e.g. two necessary and sufficient features for “man”: two-footed, animal
      - law of contradiction - an entity cannot both be and not be (both possess a feature and not possess it)
      - law of the excluded middle – an entity must either be or not be, either possess a category or not possess it (either belong to a category or not)
   2. features by which we define membership are binary
      - f. is either present or absent and can take on only one of two values: [+] or [-]
   3. categories have clear boundaries
      - Once established, a c. divides the universe into two sets of entities-those that are members of the category, and those that are not
      - no ambiguous cases, no entities which ‘in a way’ or ‘to some extent’ belong to a category
   4. all members of a category have equal status
      - no degrees of membership in a c.; no entities which are better members of a c. than others
      - are these classical c. sufficient to structure m. and knowledge?
      - best applied to phonology

5. **E. ROSCH**
   - cog. s. do not reject Aristotle, but cannot be applied to many l. features
   - Rosch: rigorous structural and TG approach in contradiction to the nature of l., notion of c. needs to be more flexible
   - inspired by L. Wittgenstein and “family resemblances”
   - category of games: “games form a family” (interrelationship we find in non-classical c.)

6. what is common to different games?
   - empirical model- when comparing, not sth. in common to all, but “a complicated network of similarities overlapping and criss-crossing”- d. of a prototype category
   - similarities=family resemblances
   - no boundaries in natural l., result of the arbitrariness of linguists

7. **“Human Categorization”, “Principles of Categorization”**
   - Rosch’s experiments
1. New Guinea speakers of Dani-2 color lexemes ('mili' and 'mola'), taught them English lexemes for various colors
   first learnt: prototypical red (moving away from the focal member dark r., cherry r.,
   scarlet later & with difficulty)

2. no words for various geometrical shapes
   first learnt: circle & triangle
   • perception-involved in v. learning; what is perceptually most salient is learnt first
   • Conclusion: human k. is organized, but c. borderlines are not fixed but fluid and vague
   • our knowledge: result of “MORE OR LESS PRINCIPLE”

Rosch’s 3 basic levels of categorization
1. superordinate level: fruit
2. basic level: apple
3. subordinate level: Mackintosh apple

Coleman & Kay
“Prototype Semantics: The English Word Lie”
a) when you kill sb. and say you didn’t- prototypical lie
b) when at friends’ you say dinner was delicious- social lie
btw.: gradation, structure of a category is defined according to the prototype
range of gradation and prototype-determined by culture
a)

• “Application of a name to a thing is in general not a matter of yes or no, but rather of
   more or less.”
• basic attitude of c.s.: our knowledge and meaning are encyclopedic
   e.g. natural category of birds:
   eagle-robin-chicken-penguin
   perceptual & cultural saliency
• category of vegetables: tomatoes-celery-potatoes-cabbage
• flexibility of categories connected to flexibility of concepts (development through life &
   physical surroundings and culture)

Charles Fillmore
• criticizes basic assumptions of c.a., but at the same time tries to offer a new framework
• what is the m. of a particular form?- wrong question
• what do I need to know in order to use a form appropriately and to understand others
   when they use it?
• m. cannot be analyzed without taking into consideration its relationship to man’s
   worldview, thought & understanding
• basic comm. function of l. necessarily implies not only linguistic k., but its
   interrelationship with the wider encyclopedic knowledge (of the world)
• criticism of Coseriu

Scenes & Frames
• rejects “checklist theories” (inclusion in a category determined by a set of necessary and
   sufficient features)
• basic terms: SCENES & FRAMES
• scenes- prototypical images we have about entities (persons, objects, events); systems
   of concepts structuring and forming various aspects of human experience; “meanings
   are relativized by scenes”
• frames- systems of l. choice directly connected to scenes

Fillmore’s examples
• ’buy’ and ‘sell’- to understand the m. of these verbs, we need the knowledge of basic
  parameters: money, goods, sale= prototypical scene in which these verbs are used
• scenes differ from culture to culture (bargaining in the Middle East)= k. of the world
• Frames-lexical sets whose members index portions or aspects of some conceptual whole
(can produce extensive nb. of sentences in which ‘buy’ and ‘sell’ appear, limited by grammar=k. of language)

• ‘walk’-prototypical v. of walking, most prototypical subject is ‘people’, not ‘animal’
  Dog walked down the street. I walked my dog around the block. I walked my hamster around the block.

• whole scene organized from the most prototypical to the least p. member-“more or less principle”

Concluding remarks

• cog. semantics brought about flexibility in the perception of l. structures and connection btw. knowledge of l. and knowledge of the world

• slight individual differences neutralised by the prototype-shared knowledge