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Semantics and Lexicology

Jesús Martínez del Castillo

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Jesús Martínez del Castillo. *Semantics and Lexicology*.

English Semantics and Lexicology

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Almería, 2012 y 2013.

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Foreword

The text I am just presenting here belongs to a book intended for students doing “Introducción en la lexicología inglesa”, 3rd year of English Philology, at Almería University. It was published twice in 2012 and 2013 with the title *English Semantics and Lexicology* and it is based on my previous one, *Introducción en la lexicología Inglesa*, 2001. However certain modifications were made in order to adapt it to the requirements of the audience now it is intended for. The main modifications are to found in the Appendixes added and the title, now a bit different.

This book is an introduction to the structural study of meaning. It tries to explain some fundamental concepts in connection with meaning, namely, the concepts of language and a particular language, and the discipline to study meaning (§ 1) as previous to the conception of meaning. After the required introduction to meaning (§ 2) the book presents *lexematics* or the structural study of meaning (§§ 3, 4, 5 and 6), a discipline proposed by Coseriu. It ends with four Appendixes applying the theory of lexematics.

Lexematics as a discipline starts with a particular conception of what meaning is and the function it plays in language and a particular language. For Coseriu, meaning primarily has to do with the conception of language. *Language is the creation of meanings* and thus *meaning is the internal function of language*. This means that meaning exists because of language and language cannot do without meaning. To study meaning involves studying language thus involving a particular delimitation and definition of what language and a particular language is.

Meaning as something internal to language is something absolute. This means that meaning is something in humans or said in other words: meaning is *universal* since it is *the manifestation of human creativity*. But at the same time *meaning is something in languages*, that is, something common in a speech community. In this sense meanings are *historical*. That is, they constitute the means used by speakers to conceive things. Historical meanings can be verified, they are something objectified, existing as common in a speech community. In this sense meaning can be studied. On the other hand, meaning is something produced by speakers who speak individually. From this point of view meaning is *sense*, the execution of the meaningful intentional purpose of the individual speaker.

1. Lexicology, lexicography, semantics and the definition of a discipline.

1.1. Three inter-related disciplines.

1.1.1. *Lexicology*

Lexicology is the science studying the lexis —also called the lexicon—of a language. It is usually conceived as the branch of linguistics concerned with the nature, meaning, history, and use of words and word elements. Very often it is also related to the critical description of *lexicography*. Lexicology in itself has to do with all particularities of words, that is, with morphology, syntax, word-formation, etymology, word-combination, meaning and history of a language. In this sense lexicology was first conceived as a branch of *philology*¹. Today it is increasingly treated as a branch of linguistics, associated with such terms as *lexeme*, *lexical field*, *lexical item*, *lexicon*, *lexis*, on the premises that these terms can offer a more precise and useful basis for the study of language than imprecise terms such as words and vocabulary.

Lexicology must be defined in terms of two basic tenets *lexis* (words or vocabulary) and *meaning*, something to be defined in itself. That is, lexicology today is identified with the study of meaning in the words of a language. The problem with lexicology thus is to state what the *lexis* of a language is, under what perspective it is to be studied, and what is the aspect you look for in its study. Bearing these considerations in mind you can say that the study of meaning (either if you call it lexicology or if you call it lexematics, as we are going to do) constitutes a discipline in itself, that is, an *autonomous discipline*. This means that the study of the words constituting the vocabulary of a language, the set of lexical units of a language, has to deal with two objects: words on the one hand, and meaning on the other. These two objects are complex enough and as a consequence you have to define them previously in themselves before you start with the definition of lexicology. But these two objects must be studied separately and in their own terms.

Words and meanings constitute two objects easily identifiable. Speakers can easily identify words and meanings at least intuitively. But the study of the lexis of a language cannot start with the primary identification of these objects. It is necessary to examine first certain assets given in connection with both.

¹ Philology, coming back to Antiquity since the times of the lower Roman Empire in Alexandria, has received its modern interpretation since Friedrich August Wolf in 1777. It is the branch of knowledge dealing with the study, commentary and interpretation of texts in a particular language. In this way philology deals with the history, customs, institutions, etc. of a language. The general method of this branch of knowledge is criticism. Since it deals with linguistic matters it is the comparison of texts from different times; at the same time since it deals with literary texts it is the internal study of texts (see Saussure 1974: 39-40).

1.1.2. *Semantics*

On the other hand *semantics* is the science studying meaning in general. Semantics is usually related to the following four different disciplines:

- a) *Semasiology*, a branch of linguistics dealing with the study of the meanings of words and sentences: their denotation, connotation, implications, and ambiguities. The study of words and meanings can be made at the different levels constituting the analysis of language: phonological, grammatical (morphological and syntactic) and semantic.
- b) *Philosophy*, the study of logical expressions and the principles determining the truth or falsehood of sentences.
- c) *Semiotics*, the study of signs and what they refer to and the responses to those signs by speakers.
- d) *General use*. In general use, that is, in the intuitive study of meaning, semantics is of interest since the meanings of words include denotation, connotation, implications, and ambiguities.

Semantics thus is a general discipline, not specific, of the lexis of a language. The science due to study the lexis of a language must be defined in its proper terms not giving for granted the definition of meanings and words.

1.1.3. *Lexicography*.

Lexicography is the technique of making dictionaries, that is, the technique of applying the principles discovered in lexicology to give an accurate account of the meaning of words usually stated in dictionaries and grammars (lexicographical works). However, it is a fact that lexicography developed independent from lexicology. The technique of lexicography eventually developed in such works of reference as dictionaries, glossaries, thesauruses, synonym guides, usage guides, and concordances independent from all lexicological theories.

Lexicography has had great development in the last decades of the 20th century. In the history of English lexicography I want to remark the significance of three important works: the *Oxford Dictionary of the English Language*, second edition, 1989, 20 volumes; the *Webster's Third New International Dictionary*, and the *Random House Dictionary of the English Language*. These three works are not simple. They are projects with different short versions (*unabridged versions*) of the information given. Oxford University Press has published the most trusted and prestigious dictionary for English usage, the *Concise Oxford Dictionary*, aimed at speaker's use.

On the other hand, Collins Publishers, in collaboration of the University of Birmingham, has published the *Collins-CoBuild English Language Dictionary*, a project aiming at "helping learners [of English] with real English". Although it was originally aimed at learners of English, from my point of view this dictionary overcomes the information given by other dictionaries. It gives much more detailed information about the use of words than any other dictionaries. It gives all types of information of the use of words, category, meaning, combination of words, usage, pronunciation,

synonyms, antonyms, technical description of the meaning of words, in the unabridged version. As a complement to this, Collins published the *Collins-CoBuild English Grammar*, together with *Collins-CoBuild Student's Grammar* and *Collins-CoBuild English Grammar Exercises*. But these complementary books are just like a practical summary of the grammar referred to in the unabridged version of the dictionary.

This project is an illustration of what lexicography is: the study of the meaning of words and the information necessary to use. In this sense the dictionary is the best. Their approach to grammar, on the contrary, is not a scientific study of words and their meanings since in this aspect they do not need a theory. They deal with words and meanings based on practical intuition. If on the one hand the dictionary is a master-piece, the grammar extracted from the unabridged version is not at the same level as the dictionary is. Since the grammar was aimed at giving complementary information of the words in the dictionary it is very poorly structured in *sense functions* or *textual functions* (*sense categories* or *textual categories*), something in vogue in the early 90's² in language teaching in the so-called notional-functional method. Sense functions have to do with one of the levels of linguistic contents, the lowest and thus the most complex since it encompasses the universal and historical levels (§ 2.6.).

The task today is to fill up the gap between the study of the meaning of words and the technique of stating the meaning of words, that is, to fill up the gap between lexicology and lexicography, since the development of lexicography has grown much faster than lexicology. The technique of making dictionaries has grown much more than the theory supporting it.

So far we have not tried a definition of the discipline that may study the meaning of the lexis of a language. In order to do this, it is necessary, first, to define meaning, and this can only be made after you know the role of meaning in language. In this sense we are going to study some previous concepts necessary for the definition of the discipline. Once we know what function meaning plays in language, it is necessary to study the method to define a discipline.

1.2. The definition of a discipline.

A discipline is to be defined in terms of the adequacy of it to the object it studies. The adequacy of a discipline thus is not in the discipline itself but in defining the object of study. In this sense the object of study of a discipline determines the postulates, methods and purposes of that discipline. The object of study of a discipline is nothing determined but something determinable, something to be determined just by the the postulates of the discipline. In the object of study of a discipline it is necessary to distinguish three different aspects:

² *Collins-CoBuild English Grammar*, 1990.

1. It is necessary to distinguish the thing to be studied, *the material object* of study of the discipline.
2. The specification of the material object, *the formal object "quod"*:
3. And the purpose looked for in object of study, *the formal object "a quo"*.

These three aspects, altogether, constitute the object of study of a discipline.

The material object is the thing or set of things the discipline deals with. By definition the material object is something not yet determined but something to be determined in terms of the postulates, method and purposes of the discipline. The object of study is autonomous in respect to the discipline, that is, it constitutes something the postulates, methods and purposes constituting a discipline must be adequate to. A discipline starts with an intuition about the object of study. Then, the intuition must be changed into statements thus developing it in terms of the adequacy of it to the object of study. The object of study then plays a double function: first, it must be created in terms of the initial intuition had by the scientist, and second, the postulates in the development of initial intuition must be adequate to the object of study. The object of study thus determines the discipline. And the contrary: the object of study must be accommodated, that is, be defined in terms of the postulates of the discipline.

The specification of the object of study is made with the theory. The determination of the material object is made through the formal object "*quod*" and *formal object "a quo"*. *The formal object "quod"* has to do with the aspect to be studied in the material object. For example, in lexicology the material object is words. But words can be studied under any of the aspects having to do with language: the material formation of words as sounds (phonology), the formation of words as forms (morphology), the combination of words (syntax) and the contents they bear, meaning (lexicology, semantics). In lexicology the material object "*quod*" is *meaning*.

But both the material object and the formal object "*quod*" are not enough to define a discipline. Together with the material and formal object "*quod*" a discipline must be specified in terms of the purposes imposed on both the material object and the formal object "*quod*". It is *the formal object "a quo"*. The formal object "*a quo*" is a cognitive perspective imposed on the object of study. It consists in the specification of the purposes imposed on the study of both the material object and the formal object "*quod*". It is thus something not necessary in the formation of the object of study but something mental added (the purposes looked for in the study of the material and formal object "*quo*") thus defining both the object of study and the discipline. The formal object "*a quo*" in the case of lexicology it is the set of relationships of signification that words bear with one another.

You can summarize the principles of study of a discipline in the following way:

- | | |
|--------------------------|--|
| a) Material object: | the things selected to be studied. |
| b) Formal object «quod»: | the specification of the material object in a particular aspect of it. |

- c) Formal object «a quo»: the purposes in accordance with the specification of the formal object “quod” is to be analysed.

As we said, the material object can be studied under many perspectives and with many purposes. The material object thus can be common to a certain number of disciplines; the specification of the material object “quod” can as well be common to many or several disciplines but the perspective and the purpose you look for in the object of study makes the discipline unique thus distinguishing a discipline from others. The object of a discipline is thus constituted with something considered to be (=exist) (material object), a perspective imposed on it (the formal object “quod”) and the purpose you impose on the combination of both (the formal object “a quo”). This combination makes the discipline unique.

In the case of the discipline we are commenting now, lexicology, the material object is constituted with words; the formal object “quod”, with the contents they convey, that is, meaning; and the formal object “a quo”, with the signification words can have in a language

Material object	Words
Formal object «quod»	Meaning
Formal object «a quo»	The signification of words.

Words can be analysed under many points of view. A word, say, *book* or *table*, can be analysed under the different levels constituting language. In order to illustrate this, you can see that these two words can be analysed under the point of view of the production of sounds (phonetics) (formal object “quod”): *book* is a set of three phonemes [b], [u], [k], forming a particular combination different from others of the same or similar class, as for example *cook*, *look*, *boom*, *soot*, etc. In every case the elements forming *book* keep two different relationships of opposition: syntagmatic and paradigmatic. [b] opposes [p] paradigmatically and is to be combined with vowels in syntagmatic relationship of combination. In this sense, words can be the object of study of *phonology*. In the same way *book* can be analysed from the point of view (formal object “quod”) of morphology: it is a noun that can take plural morpheme, opposes other nouns paradigmatically and can be combined with adjectives and other nouns syntagmatically. And finally *book* can be analysed from the point of view of syntax: it is an element that can play the function of subject and object in a sentence and can constitute the head of a noun phrase thus making up particular paradigmatic structures and at the same time it is to be related to verbs, thus forming different syntagmatic structures. That is, words can constitute the material object of many disciplines. All these disciplines have to do with lexicology since lexicology is the study of words.

2. The definition of meaning

2.1. The role of meaning in language.

Meaning is something particularly problematic. Meaning defines language: it is in direct connection with the very existence of language. At the same time meaning manifests itself in language. Language is nothing but the creation of meanings³. In this sense meaning is *universal* and necessary. But meaning is not abstract but *real*. Meaning manifests itself in the words and expressions of a language. It manifests itself as diverse, that is, as multiple meanings. In this sense meaning is something belonging to particular languages, something *historical*.

In the first sense, meaning is *the internal function of language*. It is nothing but *contents of conscience*⁴, something created when language is created, that is, when language is spoken. In the second sense, meaning is something *objective*, belonging to a particular language and thus *something common offered to speakers* in a particular community. In this sense, meaning is *virtual*.

Meaning constitutes the primary function of language, that is, *to mean*. Language is determined and thus defined by its *meaningful function*, its internal determination, the function of *creating meanings*. In this sense, language is autonomous⁵ since it has an internal determination.

Since language is real, something lived by speakers, meaning appears in contexts and situations, that is, meaning is *sense* as well.

The primary function of language must not be confused with the instrumentality of language, that is, with the use made of language. Language is instrumental, that is, it is used for specific purposes the most important of which is communication. The instrumentality of language cannot be overestimated. Language cannot be defined in the use made of it. Language is to be defined by its primary function, its internal determination. The use of language constitutes the external determination of it. Language cannot be defined with its external determinations but its internal determination. Under the consideration of its internal determination language is *autonomous*, as we have already said. Under the consideration of its external determinations language is not autonomous but *instrumental*.

Considered in this way language is not properly *expression with meaning*. In language expression exists, but it does because language is primarily *meaning* and not the other way round. In this sense, according to Coseriu, you'd rather say *language is meaning with expression*⁶.

³ Coseriu 1985a: 26.

⁴ Coseriu 1985a: 27.

⁵ Coseriu 1985a: 23-33.

And in dealing with the meaningful function of language or the internal determination of it, language must be understood as *ἐνέργεια*, that is, creative activity⁷. Language is not use but the creation of meanings. Language as *ἐνέργεια* is both creation of meanings and fixing those meanings and objectification of knowledge in itself⁸ (linguistic signs). Now then, ‘to know’ means conceiving something as identical with itself and different from all other things. But that thing conceived as identical with itself and different from all other things is nothing but contents of conscience, that is, meanings⁹. And in this you have what meaning is in connection with: meaning is nothing but the internal function of language, something in connection with knowledge. Language is nothing but cognitive¹⁰ activity (Coseriu 1985a: 42, translation mine).

In this way language is the *union of intuition and expression*¹¹. It is the creation of meanings and signs to express those meanings. In this sense it is necessary to ask whether language is absolute or if language is only a language. Language has two dimensions. Language, first, it is *the formulation or execution of an intuition*. It is the *relation of an absolute subject and his creation*. And language is, second, *the execution of the relation established between two speaking subjects*. The first dimension is the *relation subject-object*, the execution of an intuition on the part of the speaker in words of a language. The second is the *relation subject-subject*: the creative subject of language presupposes other subjects with whom he has something in common. The first dimension of language is *creation*, the second dimension, *otherness*¹².

*Language always manifests as a language*¹³, a historical language, a particular language having developed in history thus being given historically. Language thus is the *apprehension of being*¹⁴, that is, apprehension not of things but the apprehension of that aspect making the thing perceived to be a thing, that is, the delimitation of *species*. Coseriu says:

Language does not certainly create entities, natural “things” or to a certain extent objective to which it attributes a particular way of being [...] [nor] the way of being attributed to “things”: on the contrary it acknowledges and delimits modalities of being in “things”; because of this it is the delimitation of species or, [...] “classes” of entities (classes that, of course, from the point of view of their objectivity, can also be classes with only one member and even empty classes)” (Coseriu 2006 “Orationis fundamenta. La plegaria como texto”. *Lenguaje y discurso*: 73-74).

⁶ Coseriu 1985a: 38.

⁷ Coseriu 1985a: 23.

⁸ Coseriu 1985a: 27.

⁹ Coseriu 1985a: 27.

¹⁰ Cognitive=referring to knowledge as the synthesis of both the sensitive and the abstract, *sensation* and *intellect* by means of *imagination*.

¹¹ Coseriu 1985a: 30.

¹² Coseriu 1985a: 31. Other-ness=alterity, the peculiar condition of humans of being together-with-another one. Speaking involves at least two speakers.

¹³ Coseriu 1985a: 16.

¹⁴ Coseriu 1985a: 32.

Something is made to be a particular thing because of language. This apprehension is not made by an absolute subject, but a historical subject, who insofar as it is historical it is at the same time social.

In this sense language is *λόγος*, that is, *apprehension of being*, but not absolute *λόγος* but inter-subjective *λόγος*, that is, *form and expression of the historicity of Man*. Human beings live in a linguistic world created by them as historical subjects. Language in general (in Spanish, *lenguaje*) relates to the first dimension, to the dimension of human subjects and Being (Man and Being). Language as a language relates to the relation of human subjects to other human subjects, who by means of language, are attributed humanity, that is, the capacity of asking for Being and interpreting it, the capacity of asking for things and interpreting them¹⁵. This apprehension of being historically manifests itself as *contents of conscience*, that is, as *meanings*.

2.2. Language, meaning and communication.

Many semanticists think that there is an intrinsic connection between communication and meaning. In communication you have to distinguish two types:

1. the transmission of something to someone. This type of communication belongs to the settings of the application of language to practical things; and
2. communication with someone. This one is the prerequisite or essential condition of any speech act.

In sense 1 communication cannot define meaning since meaning is to be transmitted by means of an act of communication, that is, meaning is prior to the act of communication. In effect, when a speaker intends to communicate something to someone he already knows what he wants to communicate. In this sense communication may fail—and in fact sometimes does. But language because of this failure is still language. This failure does not affect language.

In sense 2 communication is essential for language to be given. In this sense language distinguishes from poetry, that is, it is not absolute. Language is always intended to someone, even as a primary linguistic creation. Meanings and signs are not created for their own sake (as art is). Meaning and signs are created for others, that is, they are created in a particular language¹⁶. This means that language and meaning are historical. In this sense meanings exist before communication is established and as a consequence communication cannot define meaning.

Summing up, you cannot know what meaning is if you start with the fact of communication. Meaning is the internal determination of language so that language is to be defined with meaning. Communication is the practical use of language. The primary condition of human beings as social subjects manifests itself in language thus constituting language as the base of society. Society exists in

¹⁵ See Coseriu 1985a: 23-33.

¹⁶ Coseriu 1985a: 31.

language and because of language. For communication to exist it is necessary that society, language and meaning should previously exist.

2.3. Speech acts.

Language is activity, the activity of speaking, consisting in a set of operations performed with the purpose of “saying something about something with the help of the signs of a particular language¹⁷”. Language does not exist in itself. It does not have concrete existence. It merely exists as the performance of that activity. Language exists in the series of speech acts performed by speakers. A speech act is the performance of language on the part of the speaker. Speech acts have concrete existence thus representing the manifestation of language, both in itself and in its historical form.

A speech act has to do with the act of apprehending things, that is, with knowledge. A speech act is the manifestation of a unique intuition on the part of the speaker. In this sense speech acts are determined with the meaningful intentional purpose of speakers. Speakers speak because they have something to say and they say something because they are able to know. Speech acts thus are acts of knowing, saying and speaking.

As we said above, language does not have concrete existence, that is, language exists but merely as the creation of knowledge. In this sense language manifests as *cognitive activity*. Because of this language is delimitator of species, that is, it gives a particular object the essence of a class of things thus creating a semantic object with it.

On the other hand, a language does not have concrete existence either. It exists as a sketch, a model, a draft, a form or a pattern of an activity, that is, its existence is virtual, the knowledge of speakers to speak, that is, *idiomatic knowledge*.

The only thing with concrete existence is speech acts, innumerable speech acts. Anything in language is in speech acts. Speech acts display what language is and what a language is plus the meaningful intentional purpose of the speaker.

The purpose and function of language, to create meanings, to say something about something with the means of a language, is performed in speech acts. The purpose of language is performed by means of words, linguistic signs and concepts associated with linguistic signs. The function of speech acts is to use those words and concepts in such a way that they can refer things in the world. As you can see, since idiomatic knowledge is *virtual*, linguistic signs refer not to objects but classes of objects (remember that language is delimitator of species). It is necessary then to orientate linguistic signs to real things. And this is performed in speech acts by means of *determination*, the intellectual operation of determination manifesting itself in languages.

¹⁷ Coseriu 1982: 291.

If you say, for example, *he is a man*, the word man refers to a class of objects. However if you say *I saw this man yesterday*, the word man refers, not only to a class of objects but especially and at the same time to a particular semantic object.

The function of speech acts is to apply virtual concepts to real things. Concepts are universal and virtual, able to be applied of individual subjects thus predicating the essential characteristics they potentially denote. Speech acts thus represent an act of transformation of abstract concepts applicable only to the essence of things into concrete expressions of meaning with designation in real things. Speech acts are thus the creation of *sense*, the creation of concrete forms of the activity of speaking, that is, the creation of language or the performance or execution of language. This function is an operation of language called *determination* by Coseriu¹⁸.

2.4. Meaning and speech (or discourse).

As we saw above, speakers always speak of something (*designation*), using the elements of a language (historical means, that is, *meanings*), and say something with the help of designation and (historical) meanings, thus creating *sense*. Speakers create sense whenever they speak. In this sense speakers bear in mind who they direct their speech to (“you”, the listener) and what are the circumstances affecting their speech (the situation and context). Bearing this in mind, speakers select the elements more suitable to their needs of expression. The result is series of speech acts that in so far as they are performed can be studied and analysed as texts.

In a text, that is, in the individual use of language the language can be used at two levels:

- a) the level of denotation, or
- b) the level of connotation.

An expression is at the *denotative level* when it means the usual meaning given by the language. For example, *green* means colour and in this sense you can say

1 *grass is green; the green grass. It appears green*

But sometimes a particular word may get certain clues and shades of meaning not belonging to the meaning of the word but to the use of it under certain circumstances. In this case we speak of *connotation* (or *connotative level*) in meaning, the meaning not belonging to the language but to certain uses associated with the meaning of the word or created in a particular group of people. You can see the difference between denotation and connotation in the following examples,

2 *A green tree; green leaves; get him eat freshly potatoes and greens; the green fruits were as hard as rocks (CCELD).*

¹⁸ Coseriu 1982: 291-295.

in contrast with

- 3 *I'm waiting the green light from you; the minister gave the green light to the project (CCELD).*

The examples in the first group denote, that is, they convey the traditional meaning, the usual meaning of a language. The examples in the second group, however, represent senses that once were individual or metaphorical. Now they are inserted into the tradition of the language as extensions of meaning of the original meaning (denotation). In the case of these examples it is easy to see the connection of the meaning *green* and the use of 'green'. The meaning in 2 constitutes a metaphor formed on the base of traffic lights. In this way you can say that the meaning of the word *green* is simply *green*, that is, it has not changed. Although metaphoric it is merely an extension of meaning of *green*, based on one of the uses it has today.

However, other uses of *green* can be explained but not at first sight. Examples

- 4 *the church green, the village green*
5 *Hogan went slightly green (CCELD).*

The meaning in first example is another extension of meaning formed on the base of a change in the category used thus forming a metonymy. The change consists in the shift in the way of giving meaning. In the denotative case *green* conveys meaning with the application of an open dimension of signification, that is, as an adjective. In the new sense and due to the frequent use of the adjective in *green grass* the adjective was made to convey its meaning *green* in the way expressed by nouns.

The meaning in example 4, however, cannot be deduced unless you have heard the expression earlier. *Hogan went green* because he was *green with rage*, that is, because of the emotional state that Hogan was in (he was visibly upset and the colour of his complexion changed—only temporarily, it is supposed). Here you have an extension of meaning giving a new sense based on a metaphorical use inserted into the tradition.

But sometimes there is no transparent explanation in certain uses introduced into the tradition of the language. In these expressions unless speakers know the expression they will not understand the meaning of it. The examples

- 6 *Alex has green fingers (British English). Jim has a green thumb (American English)*

Here again the meaning of the expressions can be explained and the connection with the meaning of *green* can be established. These expressions are no longer independent from the elements they are constituted with. The elements in them cannot be separated and used separately. These expressions belong to repeated speech. They mean to be good at gardening.

In most cases a word may exist in the language meaning something independent, with no connection with the original reality the word was formed on. The examples

7 *An infant; infantile*

have lost the connection with the origin in accordance with the word (its form and meaning) *infant* was formed. *Infant* goes back to Indo-European and the meaning and form of the word is a combination of a prefix plus the stem of a verb. The verb in this case has disappeared, and the extant prefix *in-*, is no longer operative in the word, although it is operative in the language. *Infant* comes from the negative prefix *in-* plus the Indo-European verb *fari* (to speak), thus meaning «someone who cannot speak yet». These relationships of signification have been lost; now the word is an independent one thus conveying clues of meaning with no connection with its origin, etymology or formation.

Vocabulary thus is a set of elements, every one with a particular historical explanation, but this explanation does not necessarily provide us with sufficient reasons for the explanation of its meaning. The case of *infant* and *infantile* is illustrative enough to conclude that the etymology or the formation of words and meanings is not the explanation of the meaning of words. It is necessary to know something else in every case. Anyway, the analysis of meaning or the analysis of any aspect of the historical language is the analysis of the present state of a tradition.

2.5. The configuration of speaking

A language is a technique for any possible speech historically determined. In this sense, language is a historical technique in the activity of speaking. In fact the different languages are nothing but modes in the activity of speaking. The different modes in the activity of speaking constitute the different languages. Languages are not uniform and the elements in them keep different types of relationships with one another.

2.5.1. *The architecture of the language.*

A technique of speaking insofar as it is a technique, that is, the knowledge required to do something, in this case to speak, has both an external and internal equilibrium. Every language, every technique of speaking has an architecture or *external equilibrium of speaking* and a structure or *internal equilibrium of speaking*. More precisely: a technique of speaking has an architecture and in every part of that architecture has a structure.

The architecture of the technique of speaking insofar as it is the external equilibrium of the technique of speaking is *the synthesis of idiomatic knowledge*, determined, within synchrony, by three sets of differences:

1. *diatopic differences*, or the differences in the technique of speaking determined in the territory where the language is spoken. Languages are spoken differently in the different territories

where they are spoken. The differences originated in this way are called *dialects*, *accents* or *dialectal accents*. For example, the English language is constituted with a large group of dialects, roughly speaking called British English, Scottish English, Cokney, American English, Australian English, South-African English, and World English. Something similar happens with Spanish. A dialect is a *syntopic language*.

2. *diastratic differences*, or the differences in the technique of speaking determined by the different social strata in connection with the disciplines or fields of knowledge constituting those social strata. The differences originated in this way constitute the *levels of speech*. In this sense you can single out the language of guild corporations: the language of doctors, computer engineers, legal language, etc. These languages do not have geographic definition, since they are the same everywhere where there are professional specialists dealing with their professional fields. A particular level of speech constitutes a *synestratic language*; and
3. *diaphasic differences*, or the differences in the technique of speaking determined by the situations and contexts where the language is spoken, thus giving birth to the *styles of speech*. In this sense you can point out *formal speech* or *informal speech*, *poetic language*, etc. These functional languages do not have geographic definition but they include regional differences. A particular style of speech constitutes a *symphasic language*.

A technique of speaking uniform and homogeneous is a *syntopic*, *synestratic* and *symphasic* language, thus constituting a *functional language*. A *functional language* is a technique of speaking considered in a particular territory, a level of speech and a style of speech. It is a *completely homogenous* language, the only language able to be spoken. In this way and considering the variety of idiomatic knowledge, every speaker knows several functional languages. For example, you students, know the formal language of Spanish usually spoken at university levels or the one in newspapers or on television. At the same time you know informal language, the one you use when you meet your friends; the different functional languages you use at class (when you study, for example, language change you use technical expressions as *historicity*, *historical subject* and *historical object*, *otherness*, *speech*, etc.; when you study geography you use expressions such as *an eccentric country*, *North*, *South*, and so on). At the same time you know the language spoken at home, etc. That is, you know several functional languages. In Spanish the use of formal language when addressing someone strikingly changes from the use of informal language. You say ¿Viene Vd. conmigo? Instead of the informal ¿vienes tú conmigo?

Standard language or *model language* is a unitary language, that is, it is a *functional language*. It does not usually have dialectal variety but it is determined diaphasically since it is usually spoken in different styles of speech. In order to determine what a functional language is like, you have to say that a functional language is an ideal model used by speakers. As such it has *virtual* existence as knowledge.

The architecture of the language relates to the multiple techniques of speaking existing in a historical language, that is, to the different dialects, levels and styles of speech making up a historical language. In the different elements constituting the architecture of the language there is *diversity*. In

the architecture of a language you can find *analogous* terms (signifiers) for different meanings (signified). For example, in American English when referring to the *ground floor* you'll say the *first floor*. In the same way when referring to *luggage* you say *baggage*. And the other way round: to refer to a station where you can fill petrol into the tank of your car, you'll say *a gas station* but *a filling station* or *a petrol station* in British English. Similarly to prepare the table for eating you will say *to put the table* in American English, and in British English to *lay the table*. That is, you have the same meanings but *analogous* signifiers.

In the architecture of the language there are different techniques of speaking with different traditions and thus different norms of the language. That is, in the architecture of the language there are different *functional languages*. Historical languages thus constitute a set of functional languages. As a consequence the different techniques of speaking in a historical language must be considered different languages, dealt with and analysed separately.

2.5.2. *The structure of the language*

The technique of speaking insofar as it is knowledge has an internal equilibrium. The structure of the language represents the internal equilibrium of the technique of speaking. It relates to the elements constituting a functional language. In the structure of a language you can find *opposition* and *solidarity* between signifier and signified, that is, different signifiers relate to one meaning. For example, in English you can have the adjectives

8 *courteous; cultivated; cultured; genteel; polite; refined; well-bred; well-mannered*

to relate to one meaning. In this sense they oppose one another. At the same time they oppose the set of adjectives,

9 *barbaric; barbarous; boorish; ill-bred; savage; uncouth.*

And in a different manner they oppose as well

10 *clumsy;*

and in another aspect they oppose

11 *contemptible.*

At the same time all these adjectives are to be combined with nouns and expressions denoting human beings. You can say, *he is courteous, uncouth, clumsy or contemptible*. That is, you have relationships of opposition and solidarity within the structure of a language.

As we saw earlier, the functional language is the only one capable to be executed, that is, to be spoken. A historical language, say English, does not exist in itself, it does not have concrete existence, it cannot be performed unless in the different functional languages making constituting it. All oppositions to be found in a language must be established and described in the functional language they belong to.

A technique of speaking is primarily to be understood as the performance of speech in a speech community as the usual or normal performances of a homogeneous set of procedures and linguistic units. This technique of speaking is independent insofar as it has usually been performed and at the same time it is objectively functional, that is, distinctive or oppositional. In this sense a technique of speaking is to be distinguished from speech. The technique of speaking underlies speech and thus is different from it. The individual performances of a particular language are to be distinguished from the technique of speaking, but the technique of that particular language is implicit in these individual performances of speaking. At the same time the technique of speaking manifests itself in individual performances.

With this you can separate different aspects in the activity of speaking:

- 1) first, *speech*;
- 2) second, the *technique* in producing speech;
- 3) third, what is *usual*;
- 4) and fourth, what is *systematic*.

From speech you can abstract, that is, extract the technique (knowledge), which is both usual and oppositional and functional (systematic).

These distinctions and the separation of them in the technique of speaking and the individual performances of speaking can be made through a double operation of abstraction:

- A. abstraction of the individuality, subjectivity, originality and creativity of speaking subjects at the moment of speaking; and
- B. abstraction of the variety of performance in a speech community.

That is, the concept of the technique of speaking is nothing representing a concrete object. It is a concept got through abstraction. It has not concrete existence: it merely exists as virtual (knowledge) in the speech of individual subjects¹⁹.

In connection with this process of abstraction the technique of speaking can be structured at four levels:

¹⁹ See Coseriu 1992: 293.

1. speech
2. the norm of the language
3. the system of the language
4. the type of the language

Speech is the concrete performance of the technique of speaking, something given in the daily use of language, in speech acts.

The *norm of the language* is *the language already performed and constituted in a tradition in the technique of speaking*. It encompasses everything that, in the technique of speaking, not necessarily functional (that is, distinctive), is socially or traditionally fixed thus constituting *common use* in the speech community.

The *system of the language* is *a set of functional and distinctive oppositions*, that is, *a set of possibilities*. It encompasses everything that, within the sphere of tradition, is at the same time traditional and objectively functional, that is, *distinctive*.

And the *type of the language*, *the set of oppositions and distinctions proper of a language*, a set of *tendencies* to be found as proper and characteristic of a language.

The *norm of the language* relates to language as a social institution; *the system of the language* relates to the set of distinctive functions, that is, to oppositional structures. The *norm of the language* is a formalized set of traditional performances: it encompasses what has already been performed. The *system of the language*, on the contrary, is a set of possibilities of performance: it encompasses both what has already been performed and what has not been performed yet but is virtually existent, that is possible and can at any time be created in accordance with the functional rules of the language.

The separation of the different levels in the structure of the language is fundamental to the study of it. In order to illustrate this distinction let us analyse the following examples. Imagine the following pieces of speech

- 12 *Nobody knows what I went through waiting for the verdict.*
- 13 *No one knows what I experienced when waiting for the verdict.*
- 14 *I was unhappy and miserable waiting for the verdict.*
- 15 *Nobody knows how anxious I was when I waited for the verdict.*
- 16 *I was completely distressful and alone when waiting for the verdict.*

Here you have five individual performances of a speech act. They all are coherent and congruent, and they all at the same time they are correct and adequate, appropriate and opportune. They describe a situation affecting the speaker. If you analyse them, you can say that they constitute different performances of the activity of speaking. They represent five speech acts thus belonging to *speech*. They represent the lowest level in the activity of speaking, since they are concrete speech acts.

If you analyse them at a second sight and abstract what is valid for future performances, you can see that there are many elements having been previously performed and thus common to all speakers of the speech community we call the English language. You can single out elements belonging to the semantic level: the use of words with their corresponding meanings, *know, go through, wait, verdict*; elements belonging to the morphologic level, the plurality, the use of suffixes either to form words, to conjugate verbs or to form some adjectives, the use of determiners, or prepositions. You can find elements belonging to the syntactic level, the word order, the arrangement of elements; etc. you can single out elements belonging to the phonetic level and elements belonging the level of meaning. That is, in this second analysis you select all those aspects that are common and belong to the language already performed and constituted in a tradition in the technique of speaking. Since they all are common and have previously been performed they constitute *the norm of the language*. This second analysis was possible through abstraction, that is, you have neglected anything individual (subjectivity, originality and creativity) and contextual and have selected what is *usual* or *normal*.

But if you have a closer look at these sentences you may see that some elements keep different relationships of opposition and solidarity. The combination of all these elements constituting sentences is possible because of relationships of opposition and solidarity (opposition in words, nouns, verbs, and adjectives; opposition in the meanings expressed; opposition in the combination of the elements, etc.). When you use one of the elements referred to (*what I went through*, for example) you cannot use another one (*what I experienced*; etc.). This third analysis leads us to the functional and distinctive oppositions, making us conclude that the different elements are combined in the way they are but can be combined in a different way, that is, they have to do with the *system of the language*, a concept got through abstraction as well.

Finally you can speak of *the type of the language*, that is, you can speak of functional tendencies proper of this language thus distinguishing from others. For example, the combination of verb + particle (*go through*) or verb phrases with no explicit expression of the subject (*when waiting*), or the tendency not to mark person distinction in verbs (verbal form *went*) are peculiar of English.

Language can only be described and analysed as a *functional language*. A functional language is the only language apt to be spoken. A *functional language* does not relate either to a historical language or the totality of speech of a particular speaker. Functional description and structural description are given only in a *functional language*, since functional description is structural. Oppositions must be described in the *functional language* they belong to. Description is to be made as many times as the terms studied are found in different structures²⁰.

²⁰ See Coseriu 1981: 118-123.

2.6. The configuration of linguistic contents.

Meaning is present at all levels of idiomatic knowledge²¹ (=linguistic competence). Linguistic competence is the universal human activity that individual subjects as representative of traditions in the technique of speaking perform individually. The activity of speaking has an *universal level* going beyond all languages and having to do with speaking and the conditions of speaking; a *particular level* having to do with traditions in the activity of speaking thus constituting techniques in the activity of speaking; and an *individual level* relating to the individual performances or executions, having to do with the particular needs of expression of speakers. When speakers speak they will always speak about things, with the help of the means of expression of a particular language, thus creating new *senses* having to do with particular subjects, topics and situations. Linguistic contents is structured.

The first aspect of the configuration of linguistic contents, *designation*, relates to the universal level of speaking. Designation is the connection of language to things in the world. Designation is not the mere act of pointing at something. It cannot be given but with the means of a language.

The second aspect of the configuration of linguistic contents, *meaning*, relates to the particular level of the activity of speaking, that is, to the particular configuration of the facts of experience made by a language²².

And finally, the third aspect of the configuration of linguistic contents, *sense*, relates to the individual level of the activity of speaking, the kind of meaning created in every case, by every speaker in particular circumstances with the help of meaning and designation. *Meaning* has to do with the linguistic description of contents. Meaning is structured and belongs to the particular language. *Designation*, belonging to the configuration of things in the real world made by the speaker at the moment of speaking, and *sense*, belonging to the individual subjects who speak, not to the particular language.

For example, Sp. *traer*, E. *bring*, Fr. *apporter*, It. *apportare* and G. *bringen* (examples by Coseriu) constitute different meanings. They can only be defined by means of the relationships of signification working as oppositions or solidarities in the languages they belong to. They however can designate the same fact of experience under certain circumstances. Similarly the Sp. *escalera*, E. *staircase*, It. *scala*, and G. *Treppe*, can designate the same things, but they constitute different systematizations of experience, that is, different meanings.

In the same sense, the fact that the dimension of length of two objects, A and B, is different from each other is expressed in one language as “A is larger than B”, and in another language as “A exceeds B”, and another one, simply as, “A is large, B is small”²³. The examples of identical

²¹ See Coseriu 1992: 91-92.

²² Coseriu 1985a: 247; 1987: 206-208; and 1992: 96.

²³ Example by Coseriu.

designation by different meanings are very numerous, even within a particular language. The following expressions have the same designation (giving one's opinion) but different meanings:

17 *as I see it; in my opinion; personally I believe; personally I feel; it seems to me; I must say that...; don't you think that...; Id just like to say...; from my point of view; as far as I'm concerned; to my mind; the way I see it...; from where I stand...; if you ask me...; I reckon...; what I reckon is...; I'd say...; I'm convinced that...; I consider...; I'm of the opinion...; its my opinion...; my own view of the matter is...; personally I consider...; I hold the opinion...; its my considered opinion that..; etc.*

Sense is the particular contents of a text or a textual unit insofar as this contents does not coincide with *meaning* and *designation*. The *sense* of the following syllogism, *all humans are mortal; Peter is human; thus Peter is mortal*, can be paraphrased in the following way: "if something is applied of a class it will necessarily to be applied of all members of that class". Peter in this case is not a mere semantic object but only an item of a class. It would mean the same if the item was Mary or Andrew. As a matter of fact, this syllogism can have the sense of remembrance to someone of their mortal condition: *remember that you are mortal, or remember that we all shall die*. In poetry this syllogism can be the symbol of human fragility²⁴. Questions; answers; the expression of wishes; likes; dislikes; feelings; demands; requests; offers; refusals; giving opinions; encouraging; persuading; complaining; threatening; greetings; etc., are sense categories and thus textual categories.

The distinction of *designation*, *meaning* and *sense* manifests itself in the contents of a particular expression and can be verified in a speech act. A speech act refers to things in the world, that is, it refers to an extra-linguistic state of affairs by means of particular idiomatic means and conveys a particular textual function. *Designation* is the reference to extra-linguistic world; *meaning* is the contents given in every case by the particular language (=that is, the tradition in the technique of speaking or the language as a social institution) used in the speech act; and *sense* is the particular linguistic contents that in a particular speech act is meant by means of *designation* and *meaning* and beyond *designation* and *meaning*²⁵.

2.7. The characterization of meaning

So far we studied all circumstances affecting meaning. We analysed

- 1) the act of communication and concluded about the precedence of meaning over communication;
- 2) speech acts. We saw that speech acts represent the act of creation of language by individual subjects, since a speech act is the execution of an intuition on the part of the speaker²⁶. And it

²⁴ Example by Coseriu.

²⁵ Coseriu 1985a: 247.

²⁶ See Coseriu 1985a: 75; Coseriu 1986a, 27-32.

is here in speech acts, that is, speech, that you can start with the analysis of meaning. But meaning by definition does not belong to speech but to the particular language;

- 3) the use of language in speech. We concluded about the different uses an expression can have. It can either mean or connote;
- 4) language as a technique in the activity of speaking. Language represents a set of traditional meanings having been inserted into the tradition thus constituting the *lexis* of a language. In this sense, we studied language as the activity of speaking, not uniform by varied;
- 5) the configuration of the activity of speaking and concluded about the importance of the functional language and the structure of the functional language. In order to study any element of language it is necessary to determine the different levels it involves;
- 6) the configuration of linguistic contents and in this we saw the different levels in the signification of linguistic content. In other words: we studied the basic tenets to be born in mind when dealing with meaning.

And now it is the moment to see what meaning is. So then, *what is meaning?*

2.7.1. *Interpreting linguistic expressions: objectified meaning.*

In connection with meaning language is to be defined in terms of three important aspects, verified in an immediate way by speakers:

2. Language has meaning: you'd rather say that language is meaning;
3. Language is intentional, that is, you can either speak or keep silent, speak in this or that way, in accordance with your purpose and intention.
4. Language always manifests itself as *a language*, that is, in the form of historical traditions or languages. In this sense language divides humankind in different historical communities just determined as *linguistic communities* or *speech communities*.

These three characteristics must be analysed separately.

2.7.1.1. *Objectified meaning, the conscience of speakers.*

It is usually said that language is expression. But expression when applied to language cannot be understood as the simple, immediate and naturally necessary manifestation of language. The expression of language is the expression of *objectified meaning*. Immediate expressions, purely exclamatory reactions, can have sense, but they cannot bear meaning. They are to be interpreted in terms of a particular context.

For example, you can infer the presence of someone producing a noise out of the very noise. You can infer that there is somebody in the room upstairs if you hear a noise similar to the one people make when they step around. But such a noise, if considered an expression, cannot be considered language, just because it has no objectified meaning. What that expression conveys is merely the fact

of the presence of someone making such a noise, not the function played by someone. The interpretation of such a fact consists in the inference from the proved existence of the noise to the verification of the presence of somebody, something given in the particular real context of that noise not yet verified. That is, you deduce the presence of somebody based on the real existence of the noise, although you have not verified the connection of both factors (the noise and somebody: the noise produced by somebody).

On the contrary, the interpretation of linguistic expressions consists in the inference from a proved existence (the one of an expression in its concrete elements) to an essentially different domain, *the conscience of speakers*. In principle, speakers in themselves have nothing to do with that concrete expression. The connection between the conscience of speakers and linguistic expression, that is, signs and knowledge, is usually said to be *arbitrary*. Arbitrary here is to be interpreted as *end-directed and historically motivated*²⁷.

Hence the fact that materially identical expressions (or very similar expressions) can convey quite different meanings depending on the language (=the system of signification) in accordance with they are to be interpreted. And even within a language the material similarity of expressions does not relate to the similarity of meanings. For example, the material similarity of such words as

18 *pair - pear*

does not guarantee the similarity of meanings. In the same way

19 *peace - piece;*

Or in a bit different way

20 *sniff, snuff, snub, snug.*

On the contrary, *house* and *home*; *dog* and *hound*; *young* and *new* denote similar contents but they are materially different.

Another example:

21 *President Bush swore in his cabinet*

This sentence can, at least, have two interpretations:

²⁷The concept of arbitrariness by Saussure must be revised in terms of the historically determined condition of linguistic signs. Arbitrary means not necessary but motivated only because of use; it is something historically motivated (see Coseriu 1985a: 37-38; Coseriu 1988: 24, footnote 38).

“President Bush made the members of his cabinet solemnly promise to fulfil and accept the duties inherent to their jobs”, and

“President Bush uttered blasphemous words before the members of his cabinet”.

In either case there is no direct connection between the elements used in the expression and the interpretation of them. The only relationship to be found between them is in the *conscience of speakers*, that is, the creative knowledge of speakers and in a greater or lesser degree the command (=knowledge) of the technique used in the expression. In comparison with the interpretation made on the noise coming from the room upstairs the difference consists in the base of the inference. In the case of the noise the connection between the noise produced and the agent constitutes the base of the inference. In the case of the linguistic expression in the last example there is no direct connection since the base for the inference is in *the conscience of speakers*. For the interpretation of the linguistic expression it is necessary to create the meaning starting from the elements given.

The fact that similar expressions do not involve similar meanings and viceversa, that similar meanings are not expressed with similar means, represents the radical separation of *the world of meanings* from *the world of signs and symptoms*²⁸. And this fact leads us to conclude about the nature of language: *language is the creation of meanings* (see quotation in 2.1.).

The most direct consequence of this is that language is not *expression with meaning* as it is usually said, but *meaning with expression*. In language it is meaning and not expression the determining thing. Expression certainly exists but in terms of meaning. *Meaning is the purpose, aim or function of language* whereas expression is valid as far as it is an instrument of the purpose, aim or function of the language. Expression is the means of meaning. Hence the fact that the instrument (expression) can be any instrument whatsoever. In this sense you would rather say that language is meaning with expression and not the other way round²⁹.

2.7.1.2. Meaning and communication.

Another consequence of this is in connection with communication. As we saw earlier, communication is important for language, but meaning is not only important but essential to language. Meaning is indispensable for language to be. It is the fundamental category in anything linguistic. The interpretation of the last example (no. 22) would be impossible from the point of view of communication since communication would be broken: the fundamental principle in communication is that communication exists insofar as the information in the source coincides with the information in the receiver.

In order to define what meaning is, it is important to state three aspects in it:

²⁸ Coseriu 1985a: 37-38.

²⁹ Coseriu 1985a: 38.

2.7.2. *Arranging human experience.*

This arraignment does not follow delimitations, divisions, indications or landmarks prior to language. That is, this arraignment does not follow previous experience. This means that the linguistic arraignment of human experience is not necessary but contingent. The arraignment of human experience is the one you have in a language but there could be another one quite different. In fact, the many languages in the world make different arraignments or different delimitations of facts of experience. In this sense languages cannot be conceived as different nomenclatures, materially diverse for things already given. They constitute different webs of meanings systematizing the world of experience in a different way in every case. This means that language is not *proof* or *verification* of the things in the world, but *imposition of limits or boundaries on the things experienced*³⁰.

A language is an arraignment of facts of experience so that *speakers of a language believe that their ideas about the world are universal*. Consider the words by Benjamin Lee Whorf (1897-1941) describing a language without the concepts of space and time:

The Hopi language [...] contains no words, grammatical forms, constructions or expressions that refer directly to what we call “time”, or to past, present, or future, or to enduring or lasting, or to motion as kinematic rather than dynamic (i.e. as a continuous translation in space and time rather than as an exhibition of dynamic effort in a certain process), or that even refer to space in such a way as to exclude that element of extension or existence that we call “time”, and so by implication leave a residue that could be referred to as “time”. Hence, the Hopi language contains no reference to “time”, either explicit or implicit (Whorf 1956, 57-58).

In fact the Hopi language, in a similar way as English or Spanish, imposes certain views on its speakers in accordance with they think and act in the way they think it to be.

This does not mean that linguistic arraignments or systematizations cannot follow natural physically objective limits or boundaries in the things in the world. They can, but there is no objectively compulsory reason to follow those limits. In meaning there are some objective criteria but meaning does not necessarily relate to objectively delimited boundaries. There is no imperative reason in English to separate the facts of experience,

22 *flesh and meat;*

or to apply differently,

23 *young and new; or produce or yield;*

³⁰ Coseriu 1985a: 39.

or to distinguish between *stairs/staircase* and *ladder*; and so on³¹.

2.7.3. *Arranging internal things*

Properly and primarily, meaning does not arraign external things but *internal*. Meaning only systematizes the object of experience insofar as it is known, that is, as it is *contents of conscience*. To this respect Aristotle says that words are

σύμβολα τῶν ἐν τῇ ψυχῇ παθημάτων

symbols of the things experienced in the soul (=the mind) (Coseriu 1985a, 40).

External stimuli can be very helpful, say the perception of a tree, but the word *tree* does not refer to that percept, but to tree as something intuited by speakers as contents of conscience.

In this sense in language there is *no distinction between internal and external objects*. Objects of imagination are conceived in exactly the same way as the objects perceived through sensitive perception. *Siren*³², *centaur*³³, have the same objective base as *degree*, *measure*, *meter*, and the same as *donkey*, *cat* or *dog*. In this sense, the existence of names is not a proof of the existence of the things or objects they denote. On the other hand meaning in its primary absolute nomination is to a certain extent subjective: it is the *objectification of a subjective content of conscience*. The complete objectivity of meaning cannot be reached but *through the simultaneous inter-subjectivity of all acts of naming*, that is, through *the essential and original historicity of language*³⁴. The meaning of *tree* is only objective insofar as it is the contents of conscience in the speakers of a speech community, that is, insofar as it is *common* or *historical*, that is, insofar as it belongs to a language.

2.7.4. *Universality of human experience.*

Language in itself does not deal with things as entities but with the *being of things*, that is, with *the universality of human experience*. In other words: language does not deal with individual experience but *the infinite possibility of experience*³⁵. For example, the word *tree* means “being a tree”, that is, it means the infinite possibility of “being a tree”. In this way the word *tree* can be applied to existing trees as well as to trees no longer existing or trees to exist in future, imaginary trees, or non-existing trees. That is, the word *tree* can be applied to existing and non-existing beings, that is, only to *internal experience* since the real experience does not admit that application. Hence that designation of things in language be something secondary and conditioned: *designation is merely a possibility* that can only

³¹ Coseriu 1985a: 39-40.

³² A woman-like creature whose singing attracted sailors and caused the wreck of their ships.

³³ One of a race of animals said to be half a man and half a horse.

³⁴ Coseriu 1985a: 41.

³⁵ Coseriu 1985a: 40.

be created *through meaning*. In this sense *meaning* can be defined as *the possibility or virtuosity of designation*³⁶.

Words can certainly designate individual things as well. But this designation is only possible through universal signification and only by means of individualization through an act of determination. In the same way personal pronouns and demonstratives are universal in the meaning they convey but only through the determination by the situation of speaking can they designate individual entities. Proper names, on the other hand, are secondary elements in language, since they need an operation of historical individualization, not simply occasional individualization.

Designation and meaning are thus two linguistic functions completely different from each other. *Meaning is formal; designation is objective*. Linguistic contents are constituted with these two functions³⁷. *Designation* on the other hand can be *real* or *imaginary*. There are many things called *tree* able to be referred to as tree but a siren has never existed and has been referred to as a siren many times.

The three characteristics analysed here in connection with meaning (the fact that similar expressions do not involve similar meanings 2.7.1, the arraignment of experience 2.7.2, and the arraignment of internal things 2.7.3) make possible that language should be overcome and as a consequence that language should operate on things in the world: it operates on things in the world in a particular and peculiar way: a way created and structured by language. In this sense you can say that *language created the world*. Real things exist just as they are structured, delimited and created by language, both in the contents they are designated and in the part of reality they designate. A *chair*, for example, is a real object insofar as it has been conceived, delimited and created by a language. And the same can be said of *a rat*, in Spanish *una rata*, in the feminine gender, although in fact there are males and females in the species. And the same can be said of *freedom*: who can ever say that they have seen or touched freedom? However you can say that they experienced and lived freedom.

The delimitation of things by means of language is no hindrance to manage things. As a matter of fact, *language is the access to real things*. In effect, language makes possible for you to speak assertively, something having to do with real things and the truth of things thus constituting the starting point of science. Science is possible only with things previously apprehended and delimited by means of language. But science however has no connection with language but with things, although by means of language. Science does not deal with meanings but with designation and even this designation is given by means of meanings.

The arraignment of the world by means of language is not a limitation but *the possibility of knowledge*: every language is the base and the instrument of objective knowledge of the world. The

³⁶ Coseriu 1985a: 41.

³⁷ Coseriu 1985a: 40-41.

arraignment of things with language constitutes *a world of meaning*, not affecting the things referred to but making them appear as arraigned. This arraignment is not executed in the outer world of things but at the level of human *apprehension*; that is, it is executed in the sphere of the conscience although in connection with the world of things. Language prepares things for science. Language gives things a preliminary and necessary delimitation. But this preliminary and necessary delimitation is overcome by science. This overcome is made through language in models offered by particular languages³⁸.

As a matter of fact science makes an arbitrary arraignment of the world into an *objective motivated arraignment*, thus constituting a possibility of language. In principle a linguistic arraignment can be any arraignment. Amongst the many possibilities of language, one of them is *language objectively motivated*, that is, language only establishing and accepting delimitations relating to a real classification of things in the world and to limits objectively motivated and evaluated. In this sense scientific language, a technical language, as one of the many possibilities of language, is executed only partially in historical languages, namely, in a nomenclature or terminology. For example, in English, when you speak of the ear in medical terms you have a whole range of words which can only be used insofar as they refer to things defined scientifically. You have *cochlea* (Sp. cóclea or caracol), *eustachian tube*, *stirrup* (Sp. estribo), *anvil* (Sp. yunque), *semicircular canals*, *auditory nerve*, *hammer*, *auricle*. That is, they constitute a *nomenclature*. In a nomenclature the language is executed only partially since the words identify with the things denoted, that is, the contents and the designation in them are the same thing, there is no meaning in them, there is no systematization on the part of language.

The distinction between existent and non-existent depends on language. The question about the existence of things is only possible in any case thanks to meaning. In connection with meaning you can ask whether this or that relates to the essence denoted or if this or that can or cannot be verified in the outer experience. The identification thus of meaning and (existing) objects is a mistake. Language does not deal with existence or non-existence. Language merely gives *the possibility of asking for the existence* and thus of arraignment a technical conventional language with only names for things existing³⁹. For example, formerly feathers of hens, cocks and turkeys were used as instruments for writing. In Spanish the word for feather was used as the word denoting both the instrument for writing and the feathers of birds. Later on an artificial instrument for writing was invented and the word *pluma* was definitely assigned to it. From that moment on the instrument for writing is an independent existing thing. That is, language with the word *pluma* made possible the existence of the new instrument.

Since meaning is the possibility of designation, language can be conceived as a *system of designation*. Language is a system in which meaning and designation coincide. In language nouns are previously determined for individual designation or designation of classes of things (categories).

³⁸ See Coseriu 1985a: 41-42.

³⁹ Coseriu 1985a: 43.

Languages can designate individual things but only through the operation of determination and the help of contexts and situations. For example,

24 *flower, cat, roof, house,*

designate classes of things that can be applied to individual things only theoretically thus denoting only the essence of those classes of things. In themselves these classes do not designate things. The designation of things is possible through the use of certain means of a language:

25 *this flower; the cat on the roof; the house next doors,*

examples designating real things⁴⁰.

Meanings on the other hand designate classes of things. For example, *river* means the class of rivers, or *book* means the class of books, etc. *Linguistic classes are inclusive*, that is, the same word can designate a particular class and a lower or upper one. In this way you can say

26 *if you park your car there a policeman will come up and report on you.*

And you can refer to a male policeman or to a policewoman. In the same way, in the expression

27 *I stayed in that hotel for three days*

You mean both three days and three nights, that is, *day* means the class “day” and its lower class “night”. *Linguistic oppositions are not exclusive but inclusive.* In linguistic oppositions a term, say A, can mean A and non-A. In a technical language, this is not possible. In this sense a scientific language is a special use of language. But this does not mean that language is a phase in science. Science uses language but studies and analyses things designated as such objects designated. In this sense the statements of science are statements about real things. On the contrary: language does not give any information about real things: it merely informs about the way to represent them. *Linguistic arraignments of real things constitute knowledge*, but merely the first manifestation of knowledge, a distinguishing kind of knowledge in which something is apprehended as identical with itself (that is, uniform) and different from the others. Meaning is *λόγος* in the etymological sense of this word, that is, *meaning is selection of a mode of being* and thus representation of being but not a statement about being.

In this sense *language is not true or false*, as Aristotle pointed out. Language does not involve analysis and re-composition of the being of things. *Language simply stands for (that is, represents) the being of things apprehended. Words are intuitive delimitations of things not motivated definitions*

⁴⁰ Coseriu 1985a: 43-44.

of things. Even compound words, which relate to definitions of things, that is, to statements about things, cannot be considered statements about things⁴¹. In this sense a *walnut* is not a foreign nut (<OE *wealh* = foreign + nut), but a kind of fruit; or *downtown* (<OE *dune* + *tūne*) does not refer to the lower part of the town, but to the monumental or historical centre of the town, the citadel; or to *say goodbye* does not refer to the act of saying the thing stated.

2.8. Types of meaning.

In the technique of speaking linguistic meaning is manifest in many ways: in the technique of speaking the following kinds of meaning can be distinguished:

2.8.1. *Lexical meaning*

It is the meaning relating to the essence of linguistic apprehension of the world. It is the answer to the question, *what do you perceive? What do you apprehend?* It consists in *the arraignment or primary systematization of experience by means of words of a language*. It is the peculiar and particular configuration of facts of experience made by every language. The primary systematization of experience by means of words⁴² of a language may have different forms and may be given in different categories of the language. For example, the fact of experience making you say that «you feel cosy and thus comfortable» is systematized with two words, *warm* and *warmth* in English; similarly the pairs *young* and *youth* mean the state of affairs having to do with the application of age to different semantic objects or with states of affairs denoting age; *deep* and *depth* deal with states of affairs having to do with the level of the ground extending down from the surface; and *high* and *height* denote a state of affairs having to do with the position of things in connection with the perceiver of those things. In all these pairs the state of affairs denoted is the same: they represent a particular criterion introduced by the language in order to conceive the objects in the world. This criterion does not exist in itself: they represent useful creations by the language in order to systematize things (=pragmatic affairs in my circumstance affecting me) in the world. In this way you can describe things, and say

28 *The wall is high; The mountain is high*

But at the same time you can say

29 *The height of the wall; The height of the mountain*

The state of affairs described in both cases is the same. The meaning of *high* is the same as the meaning of *height* but considered from different perspectives. They both describe the same state of affairs.

⁴¹ Coseriu 1985a: 43-45.

⁴² Coseriu 1981: 88.

Because of this the primary systematization of experience by means of words⁴³ of a language can differ from the systematization made in another language. Lexical meaning is proper and peculiar of every language. Every language has its peculiar and particular configuration of meaning, characterizing itself because of that configuration. Needless to say that every configuration of meaning and every meaning in a language is *arbitrary*, that is, end-directed and motivated historically. The description of the state of affairs denoted by the English word *child* and the Spanish word *niño* is different, since the English word includes both males and females with no reference to sex. The Spanish word stresses the particular conditions of children as different from adults.

Meaning is different from real things. The arrangement of real things in other languages is different from the words used to evoke it. It is something independent, traditional, autonomous, structured, and with internal relationships of dependence within its parts and components. For example, the different way how Spanish and English apprehend the fact of experience that we call *wall* can be represented in the following diagram:

	[SEPARATING]	[SURROUNDING]
[PREVENTING]	Tabique	Valla
		Cerca
	Muro	Tapia
		Muralla
	Pared	Pared
	Wall	

There are different systematizations of linguistic *meanings* in English and Spanish although the fact of experience is the same⁴⁴.

Words with this kind of meaning are called *lexematic words*. *Lexematic words* are also called full content words. *Lexematic words* are basically constituted with three classes: nouns, adjectives and verbs. Adverbs can also be added to this class of words, although adverbs sometimes constitute extensions of meaning of adjectives.

⁴³ Coseriu 1981: 88.

⁴⁴ In the structural study of meaning, when you want to designate a feature, that is, a *seme*, the same as with other levels of structural linguistic study, you use slashes (/) or square brackets ([]) to mean that you deal with a feature in a particular meaning or with the meaning of a lexeme. In semantics and the study of meaning in general the smallest functional and meaningful unit is called a *lexeme*. A *lexeme* is made up of several features or *semes*. For example, the lexeme *young* is made up of the set of features, *young* = {[for human beings] + [BE of age: short]}, where [human beings], [BE of age] and [short age] are features of the lexeme *young*. On the other hand *young* can be considered a feature in another lexeme. For example in *infantile*. *Infantile* is to be analysed as the set, *infantile* = {[+HUMAN] + [young] + [not speaking yet]}.

2.8.2. *Category meaning*

It is the kind of meaning relating to the mode how the linguistic apprehension of real things is conveyed in a language. It is the answer to the question, *how do you apprehend things?* It is the meaning of grammatical categories (nouns, verbs, adjectives, adverbs). In this way *warm* differs from *warmth*, although they have the same lexical meaning. *High* and *height*; *young*, *youth*, *old* and *to grow old* mean differently since, although they have the same lexical meaning, they convey shades of meaning having to do with the way the lexical meaning is conveyed. The content words said above denote different states of affairs. Adjectives apply the state of affairs they convey to the state of affairs denoted with the headword. Nouns denote something as constituting semantic objects. And verbs refer the meaning they convey to states of affairs with capability of establishing different relationships with the elements in the state of affairs involved. In this sense,

30 *The young members of the family*

differs from,

31 *The young in the family*

In the first case you refer some members belonging to the family who are young but in the second you refer members who are defined as young within the family. In the first case they are merely referred to as young; in the second one they are defined as young.

Words with only category meaning are called *categorematic words* (*I, you, he, she, they, this, that, here, now, so*).

2.8.3. *Instrumental meaning.*

It is the kind of meaning relating to the contents conveyed by morphemes, either if they are independent or not. For example, the -s morpheme of *some tables* means plurality, but in *Peter's house* plays the function of determination, that is, it plays the function of a determiner. In *he comes* it means the third person singular present simple. In the same way the determiner *the* in *the man* orientates a category of objects to a particular object so that the expression does not mean “the category of man”, that is, the category of human beings, but “a particular and determined member of the category of man”. Similarly *some* in the expression *some man* orientates the category to an indefinite member of the class.

Words with this meaning are called *morphemic words*. In this instrumental meaning you can find,

- a) the determiners (*a/an, another, every, each, either, neither, one, this/these, that/those, both, few, many, several, two, little, much, my, our, your, her, his, its, John's, the, no, all, some, any*);

- b) auxiliaries (*do/does/did, am/are/is/was/were, have/has/had, can/could, may/might, will/would, shall/should, ought to, must, dare, need*);
- c) prepositions (*by, at, under, above, etc.*);
- d) conjunctions (*and, or, but, nor, for, so, yet*);
- e) clause connectors (*therefore, indeed*);
- f) subordinators (*because, when, where, if, since, as, etc.*);
- g) relatives (*who, which, when, where, why, how*); or
- h) quantifiers (*many, a few, several, plenty of, a lot of, lots of, a great deal of, a large amount of, a small quantity of*).

2.8.4. Syntactic or structural meaning.

It is the meaning conveyed by lexematic and categorematic words with morphemes within a sentence. It is the contribution of all elements making up a sentence and specifying a particular aspect of that sentence. In this sense expressions like

32 *The English defeated the Picts, and*

33 *The Picts were defeated by the English.*

have the same designation and the same lexical and category meanings but they are to be dealt with different points of view. The first example is to be analysed as {determined (Agent) + past + active (Patient)}; the second one as {determined (Patient) + past + passive (Agent)}. That is, the different meaning conveyed has to do with the combination of words, that is, with syntax.

In this sense the meaning conveyed by the combination of the elements of the language belongs, not to words, but to the very combination of words. It belongs to the system of the language. *Plurality, singular/plural, present/past/future, perfective/imperfective, comparison/non-comparison* are types of meaning belonging to structural or syntactic meaning.

2.8.5. Ontic meaning

It relates to the value of expressions in terms of the existence or non-existence of the contents conveyed or the truth or non truth of the expression and the things referred to. Ontic meaning belongs only to sentences. For example, *affirmative, negative, interrogative, imperative, exclamative*, etc. The expressions

34 *The man is tall*

35 *The man is not tall*

36 *Is the man tall?*

37 *What a tall man! or how tall the man is!*

have the same designation, the same lexical and category meanings, the same instrumental meaning, the same structural meaning except for the last sentences (no 38) and different ontic meanings. In every case it is said something in connection with the existence or truth of the elements implicit in them. In the first example the existence and truth of the contents conveyed are stated; in the second, the existence and the truth of the contents conveyed are denied; in the third the existence of the object *man* is stated but both the existence and the truth of the contents in it are put in doubt; and in the last one the attitude of the speaker in connection with the contents expressed in it is denoted.

The distinction between structural and ontic meaning, both affecting the sentence, is similar, to a certain extent, to the distinction between lexical meaning and category meaning affecting only words: the structural meaning of a sentence relates to the essence of the thing apprehended (*what does it mean?*), whereas ontic meaning relates to the existential mode of the thing apprehended (*how does it mean what it does?*). All the sentences in the examples have the same structural meaning (they all have the same syntactic relationships) but they have different ontic meanings since the same state of affairs is given different existential values⁴⁵.

Lexical meaning exclusively relates to *vocabulary*, that is, the *lexicon* of a language: it is the exclusive study of lexicology; the other types of meaning relate to grammar. This can be represented in the following diagram.

Lexical meaning	Lexicon (lexicology)
Category meaning	Grammar
Instrumental meaning	
Structural meaning	
Ontic meaning	

(Coseriu 1987, 140).

⁴⁵ Coseriu 1985a: 248-249; 1981: 89 y 1987, 136, 140 and 208.

3. Lexematics, or the structural study of meaning.

3.1. Starting point and definition.

For Coseriu, a language is a technique historically constituted for any kind of speech. The only language spoken and consequently the only language to be studied is the *functional language*, the syntopic, synestratic and symphasic language. The *functional language* is structured in four levels:

3. *speech* or the lowest level of performance of the technique of speaking, that is, the concrete execution of the technique of speaking (of a particular language);
4. the *norm of the language* or the technique of speaking, that is, the language already performed and constituted in a tradition in the technique of speaking. It encompasses everything that in the technique of speaking, functional or not, is traditionally (that is, socially) fixed and constituted in common use in the speech community;
5. the *system of the language* or the set of functional oppositions abstracted from the norm of the language. It is something in the norm of the language and got through abstraction. It encompasses everything that in the norm of the language is traditionally constituted and objectively *functional* (that is, *distinctive*); and
6. the *type of the language* or the set of oppositions proper of a particular language or preferred in that language.

This distinction of the different levels in a particular language is basic for *lexematics*. Lexematics is the study of structured meanings of words considered because of this as *lexemes*. Lexemes are words bearing the lexical function. Meaning constitutes the essence of language; a language is *structured knowledge*. Lexematics deals with *historical meanings*. It is *the study of the functional systematizations of meaning in a functional language*. A particular language is *a system of functional paradigms and combinations*.

Lexematics thus is constituted as lexicology, that is, as the *structural study of the meaning of words of a functional language*.

3.2. Material and formal objects of lexematics.

The material object of lexematics is *lexemes*, that is, words bearing the lexical function; its *formal object "quod"* is the functional character of *lexemes*, functional elements belonging to a functional language; and its *formal object "a quo"*, the syntagmatic and paradigmatic structures they keep, that is, the functional oppositions and combinations they may have in a sentence or in a phrase.

As we saw earlier, the *material object* of a discipline is constituted with the object to be known. The material object is what makes knowledge possible, *something not yet determined but determinable*. The determination of material object is made through the formal object "quod", the

perspective under which a material object is studied (the fact of lexemes bearing meaning and belonging to a functional language), and the formal object “a quo”, *the purpose* or the intention looked for in the study of that discipline (the functional and oppositional oppositions both in the axis of combination (syntagmatic) and the axis of opposition (paradigmatic)).

Since lexematics is to be assigned within lexicology, it studies the meaning of words as they belong to a functional language. In this sense in lexematics words are considered to be *lexemes*, that is, words bearing the lexical function. A *lexeme* is a unit representing *the primary systematization of experience by means of words*⁴⁶ *of a language* not in itself but as *a contents of conscience*. The lexical meaning conveyed by lexemes is historical and represents *the mode of linguistic apprehension* or linguistic intuition. They are part of a functional language, the only language apt to be spoken. In this sense, lexematics studies real meanings, the ones given in real language, the language spoken. The determination of the material object of lexematics thus is *lexemes*, words considered to belong to a *functional language* thus bearing the *lexical function*.

But since you can considerer many other things in lexemes, the formal object must be further specified. It is necessary to impose a purpose specifying it. Lexemes form particular *syntagmatic* and *paradigmatic structures*, to be found out through analysis. Lexemes keep particular relationships of *combination* and *opposition*. So, from this point of view lexematics deals with syntagmatic and paradigmatic relationships in lexemes. The purpose of lexematics thus is to study the paradigmatic and syntagmatic relationships of signification lexemes bear with them and the structures they form.

Both the material object and the formal objects need explanation and delimitation. In lexematics both the material and the formal objects coincide or said in another way: the material and formal objects impinge on one another. In the very definition of a lexeme it is the answer to the material and formal objects: lexemes are words bearing the lexical function able to form syntagmatic and paradigmatic structures. In other words: a lexeme is a word (thus belonging to a language) bearing the lexical function (meaning) thus involving certain relationships of opposition and combination, and since it is considered in the language spoken, it belongs to a functional language. So the real problem for the right conception of lexemes and lexematics is in the concept you have about language, meaning, a language and a functional language.

3.3. The lexical function.

In order to define the material object of lexematics it is necessary to find out which words or expressions bear the lexical function, that is, which words or expressions represent *the primary systematization of experience with words of a language*.

⁴⁶ Coseriu 1981: 88.

The lexical function is ideally prior to the functions necessary for the combination of words in speech. According to Coseriu and said in his words, the lexical function is the *determinatum* of category and grammar functions, that is, the thing not yet defined before category and grammar functions are assigned, or the thing left after all those category and grammar functions are removed through abstraction. Coseriu says:

[the lexical function] is the primary systematization of experience by means of words. The lexical function is prior to the necessary functions of a combination of words from the point of view of logic. As a consequence the lexical function constitutes the *determinatum* of category and grammatical functions” (Coseriu 1981: 88, translation mine).

Words bearing the lexical function are called *lexematic words*, that is, words constituted with the set of features or semes, {[lexeme] + [categoreme] + [morpheme]}, that is, words such as nouns, adjectives, verbs and to a certain extent adverbs. Because of their foundational function these words or expressions can be referred as *lexemes*.

In effect, these words have the feature [*lexeme*], that is, they have meaning thus representing a primary systematization of experience by means of words of a language. For example, *tree* denotes a particular kind of objects; *young* a particular state of affairs applicable to certain semantic objects; *write* denotes a state of affairs the elements of which are related to one another in the particular distribution of the lexeme. *Write* admits a subject, an object and an instrument; and *fast* denotes a different kind of states of affairs, the one having to do with the mode of the expression of an activity or something considered to be an activity. On the other hand, they have the feature [*categoreme*] since they all belong to a particular and peculiar grammatical category (nouns, adjectives, verbs and adverbs, respectively). And finally they have [*morpheme*], that is, they can play convey particular shades of structural meaning. English adjectives characterize because they do not have formal morphemes (plural morpheme or gender morpheme, as in Spanish). In English they play particular functions when they are in combination. Adjectives in English can be singular and plural, masculine and feminine (*a young man, young men, a young woman, young women*), play the comparative function (sometimes with morphemes or sometimes in combination) or the intensifying function (*Mary is more intelligent than her sister, her sister is very intelligent*).

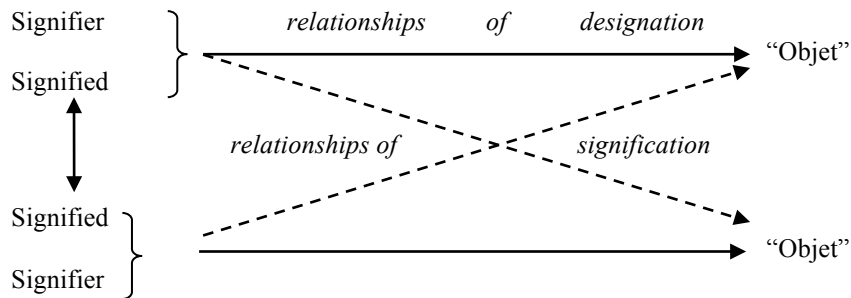
On the other hand the lexical function is not performed by the words (or expressions) not representing the primary systematization of experience by means of words⁴⁷ of a language. It is the case of words equivalent to sentences (exclamations, interjections and affirmation and negation particles). These are *categorematic words*, that is, words made up by the set {[*categoreme*] + [*morpheme*]}, *pronouns* and *demonstratives* (*this, that, here, now, so*)⁴⁸.

⁴⁷ Coseriu 1981: 88.

⁴⁸ Coseriu 1981: 88-89.

3.4. Relationships conveyed by lexemes.

In linguistic signs, entities with a double face: signifier and signified the following relationships can be found:



Adapted from Coseriu 1981: 131; Coseriu 1981: 163.

In these you can find relationships of signification and relationships of designation. Relationships of signification are those given in signs, not in objects, and relationships of designation are those given in objects. Lexematics exclusively deals with relationships of signification. Lexematics separates what belongs to the structure of signification and neglects all other possible relationships. All problems having to do with meaning and the expression of it (*signification*) are semantic. Moreover, lexematics does not deal with everything semantic. Lexematics deals only with those problems having to do with the structural relationships of signification in linguistic signs, that is, the systematization of meaning in a language⁴⁹.

3.5. Relationships of signification.

It is the relationships established in the meanings of different linguistic signs. In contrast with relationships of designation relationships of signification

- I. can be *structured*. They constitute *facts of language*, that is, *facts of the technique of speaking*. For example, the distinctions between *young* and *old*; *young* and *new*; *new* and *old* are structured in themselves;
- II. are *constant* from the synchronic point of view. For example, *young* cannot be applied to *house* or *table*;
- III. *cannot be metaphorical* at least from the synchronic point of view.

Relationships of signification, however, can be metaphorical from the etymological point of view and thus can be metaphorical in an associative sense if the etymology, either true or false, is present in

⁴⁹ Coseriu 1981: 169.

the conscience of speakers⁵⁰. *April is the cruellest month* is not a relationship of signification, since that relationship conveyed is not traditional, it belongs only to the author who said it (T. S. Elliot). Because of this one cannot say that cruelty is a characteristic of months. However *infant* is a historical metonymy but in the present state of the language all reference to metaphor or metonymy has disappeared.

Relationships of signification can be of two types: *paradigmatic* and *syntagmatic*. These are the only structured relationships of signification. A particular lexeme is to be defined in paradigmatic *opposition* to other lexemes. Thus the adjective *young* opposes *new* and *old*, since it conveys relationships of signification very similar to one another but excluding one another. Because of this one can say, *a young man* and *an old man* but if *young* is used *old* will be excluded.

At the same time a particular lexeme is to be defined in syntagmatic relationships of *complementarity* with other semantic objects. *Young* is to be *combined syntagmatically* with semantic objects such as *man*, *woman* or *person*, but not with semantic objects of the type *table*, *car* or *house*; *new* is to be combined with semantic objects such as *table*, *car* or *house* and not with semantic objects such as *man*, *woman* or *person*; whereas *old* can be combined syntagmatically with both types of semantic objects, *man*, *woman* or *person* and *table*, *car*, *house*.

3.6. Relationships of designation.

It is the relationships established between signs and things, that is, the relationships between words and the reality they refer to. In contrast to relationships of signification, relationships of designation

- I. *cannot be structured*. The designation of an object, that is, concrete designation is a *fact of speech* whereas signification is a *fact of language*, a *fact of the technique of speaking*.
- II. *are variable* from the point of view of synchrony;
- III. *can be metaphorical*⁵¹.

In this sense a particular object can be classified in several different classes and, as a consequence, it can be named, that is, designated, with all signs corresponding to these classes. This can be referred to as *multiple designation*. For example, a dog can be either a *friendly animal* or a *fierce animal*; it can be a *predator* or a *pet*; a *warden* or a *nuisance*, a *danger to avoid* or a *help* in some situations. The object referred to in all cases, however, is the same. The semantic object *dog* can have multiple designation. In the same way, the same semantic object can be treated as *house*, *home*, *flat*, *apartment*, *cottage*, *chalet*, *mansion*, *palace*, thus capable of being referred to with any of the signs referring to these classes.

⁵⁰ Coseriu 1981: 131.

⁵¹ Coseriu 1981: 131-132.

Multiple designation must not be confused with *neutralisation of meanings*, which is a *fact of signification*. Neutralisation of meanings is the fact of expressing only the features common in two meanings. In contrast of *day* and *night*, the specific features of *night* are neutralized in expressions such as

38 *I stayed in that hotel ten days*

That is, ten days and ten nights. In neutralisation only the elements common to two meanings are expressed.

In multiple designation every member of the meanings expressed keeps its proper features⁵². In this sense in the following expression there is multiple designation but not neutralisation.

39 *He likes to be at home. He lives in a cottage in the suburbs of London. His house is a good one, a real mansion.*

The designation of an object can occasionally be *metaphorical*. For example, sadness may be a mood for many people but for Miguel Hernandez is a particular range of colours:

40 *Umbrío por la pena, casi bruno
Porque la pena tizna cuando estalla
Donde yo me hallo no se halla
Hombre más apenado que ninguno.*

The element referred to is sadness, something temporary not permanent, since sadness is referred to with those words only in this text. It is not possible to transfer the expression to other contexts and say, for example,

41 **Estoy aquejado de la sombra y del color propio de los caballos, de tal modo que si estalla la causa de mi sombra y del color propio de los caballos me tizaría; etc.*

Anyone would value this expression as pedantic. A *metaphor* consists in applying the meaning of a semantic object to the designation of another one, so that the resulting meaning is a new one felt as new by speakers at the level of synchrony

Metaphor is today one of the most studied combinations in modern linguistics especially in the so-called cognitive linguistics. Metaphors as creation have always been studied. In present-day linguistics metaphor was introduced as a distinctive feature in language by B. L. Whorf and later adopted in cognitive linguistics as the keystone in the formation of ideas and the human mind (Lakoff 1990; Lakoff & Johnson 1980). In order to study metaphors it is necessary to bear in mind the following things indicated in the previous paragraph: a) metaphors have to do with

⁵² Coseriu 1981: 132.

designation and the formation of new meanings; b) metaphors are felt to be new thus appearing as new; and c) metaphors are individual and thus if they become historical, that is, repeated at the level of diachrony, they lose their value as metaphors. They have value as metaphors in the synchrony of the language when they were formed. When a metaphor is inserted into the tradition, that metaphor no longer means as a metaphor. The value it has is traditional, similar to any other historical meanings. In fact the only value it has is associative. That is, it is a metaphor puts together two ideas. If a particular expression has only associative value it does not reveal itself as a structured meaning. In order to study metaphor see Coseriu 1985a: 81; 1982: 293 footnote 23; 1992: 144; Martínez del Castillo 1999: cap 3; Trujillo 1988: 72.

3.6.1. *The character of lexematic structures in the axis of selection.*

Paradigmatic relationships of signification by lexical units manifest in the axis of selection. Lexical units distinguish from one another because they occupy different areas of signification in the contents they denote and, together with the meanings they oppose they can form a structure of signification. The elements in this structure complement each other in the axis of selection⁵³. In this sense the elements of paradigmatic relationships of signification belong to the same category.

We can illustrate this in the following way. The Spanish lexemes *pared*, *tabique*, *muro*, *cerca*, *valla*, *tapia*, and *muralla* keep paradigmatic relationships of signification with one another. They all oppose to one another in the axis of selection thus representing the systematization of a fact of experience. Each of them covers a different area of signification thus forming a paradigmatic structure of signification. In this sense they all complement one another in order to cover the whole fact of experience. All these lexemes keeping paradigmatic relationships of signification belong to the same category, and cannot oppose lexemes belonging to other categories. *Pared*, for example, does not oppose the adjective *blanco*. The type of relationship of signification kept with that adjective is syntagmatic, that is, a relationship of signification in the axis of combination.

3.6.2. *Character of lexematic structures in the axis of combination.*

Syntagmatic relationships of signification conveyed with lexical meanings manifest in the axis of *combination*. Lexical units complement one another and, depending on the contents they convey can be combined with particular semantic objects or not. Syntagmatic relationships are solidarities between lexical units, motivated by the value they have in the language. In solidarities there is always a lexical unit determining the element it is combined with. The other element of the combination is the determined one⁵⁴. For example, the units *man/woman*, that is, the fact of belonging to the semantic class of objects referred to as human beings, determine the combination with *young*, *a young lady*, for example. The same syntagmatic relationship is to be found between *object* and *new*, *a new house*. Both *man/woman* and *object* represent the determining unit. *Young* and *new* are the determined ones. In this sense *young* is to be combined with *man/woman* but not with *object*; and *new* is to be combined with *object* but not with *man/woman*. In the axis of opposition *young* and *new* have the

⁵³ See Coseriu 1981: 170.

⁵⁴ See Coseriu 1981: 182.

same value: they only separate from each other by the fact of being determined by different semantic classes. That is, their value in the language is different.

Paradigmatic and syntagmatic relationships of signification are mutually exclusive but all lexemes keep both types of relationships of signification. They are mutually exclusive in the sense that if two lexemes oppose each other they cannot complement each other, and viceversa. *Brave* and *courageous* oppose each other but they cannot be combined with each other. In the same way *fellow* and *chap* oppose each other and cannot be combined with each other. But *fellow* and *chap* can be combined with *brave* and *courageous*: *a courageous fellow who opposed the Governor's decision*. *A brave chap*.

Lexemes in this way are to be defined in the value they have in the language. The adjectives *audacious*, *bold*, *brave*, *courageous*, *daring* keep relationships of opposition to one another, that is, they are in paradigmatic opposition. They all represent an area of signification corresponding to a fact of experience. But they all keep similar relationships of combination since they all combine with nouns denoting human beings, that is, [+HUMAN].

On the contrary the adjectives *scary*, *terrifying*, *frightening* are in paradigmatic opposition to one another, that is, they mean an area of signification very similar to *audacious*, *bold*, *brave*, *courageous*, *daring*. They distinguish from *audacious*, *bold*, *brave*, *courageous*, *daring* because they are to be combined with nouns denoting semantic objects to be described as situations, [-CONCRETE: situation]. In this way one say,

- 42 *It was very brave of you to defy convention*
- 43 *An audacious chief*
- 44 *The most ambitious, bold and imaginative of citizens*
- 45 *The most honest, courageous and talented politician*
- 46 *Be a bit more daring.*

That is, these adjectives mean more or less the same. They oppose one another in the axis of selection. Every one of them adds certain clues and shades of meaning to the state of affairs denoted since they are in paradigmatic opposition. At the same time they all are to be defined in the type of combination they admit: they all admit the same semantic class of nouns to be combined with nouns denoting [+HUMAN]. In this sense they all are in the same syntagmatic relationship of signification, in the axis of combination.

- 47 *It was a scary moment.*
- 48 *The most terrifying aspect of nuclear bombing is radiation*
- 49 *The most frightening sight I have ever seen.*

In this set of examples we have again three adjectives with the same meaning, that is, three adjectives opposing one another in certain clues and shades of meaning. They are in the same

paradigmatic relationship. At the same time they have similar syntagmatic relationships since they all are to be combined with nouns denoting situation.

The adjectives *audacious*, *bold*, *brave*, *courageous*, *daring* are in the same paradigmatic relationship of opposition as adjectives *scary*, *terrifying*, *frightening*. They are to be separated because of the different value they have in the language, that is, the different syntagmatic relationships they keep: the former are to be combined with nouns denoting [+LIVING: +HUMAN]; the latter with nouns denoting [-CONCRETE: situation].

That is, the adjectives in both groups cover the same area of signification with different dimensions in every case. The different syntagmatic relationships they bear is common to all members in the different groups. The first group is to be analysed in terms of the semantic object denoting human beings and the second in terms of the semantic object denoting situations. If you analyse it in terms of features, you can describe human beings as a semantic feature, included in [+LIVING], that is, something differing from inert beings, that is, [-LIVING]; at the same time they can describe [+HUMAN] as something contrary and opposing to [-HUMAN]. In this way you can state this feature as [+LIVING: +HUMAN]. Since we all know that all human beings are living, this feature is redundant and can be stated simply as [+LIVING]. On the other hand the semantic object situations, cannot be described in terms of living or non-living, but in terms of the opposition concrete vs. non-concrete, that is, [+ABSTRACT] vs. [-ABSTRACT]. Situations represent an abstract semantic object, that is, something non-concrete, so that you can state it as [ABSTRACT: situation].

In order to establish the different relationships of signification analysed so far in the adjectives in the examples, and expressing the elements in terms of features, the lexemes analysed can be represented in the following table,

Lexemes	Paradigmatic relationships of opposition	Syntagmatic relationships	
		[+HUMAN]	[ABSTRACT: SITUATION]
Audacious	+	+	
Bold	+	+	
Brave	+	+	
Courageous	+	+	
Daring	+	+	
Frightening	+		+
Scary	+		+
Terrifying	+		+

The symbol + merely indicates that the feature in question is present in the lexeme.

Jesús Martínez del Castillo. *Semantics and Lexicology*.

That is, the relationships of signification of lexemes vary in every case and the meaning of lexemes is to be stated after analysing the different relationships of signification they bear on one another.

4. The Delimitation of Lexematic Words

Lexematics deals only with lexematic words considered as lexemes. The problem is to delimit lexematic words. But in order to delimit which words (or expressions) belong to lexematics it is necessary to make up the following seven previous distinctions⁵⁵. Remember to this respect: lexemes are to be defined in terms of the functional language they belong to.

4.1. Distinction between things and language.

In lexematics it is necessary to separate what belongs to language and what belongs to real things. The linguistic world is something different from the world of real things and different from the opinions about things. It is the separation of those things having to do with the structure of signification and those things having to do with non-linguistic analyses of things. Linguistic structures of signification have nothing to do with the objective or scientific structure of real things. In this respect several considerations must be born in mind.

4.1.1. *The problem of terminologies.*

Scientific and technical terminologies do not belong to language since they do not represent lexical structures in a language: they constitute the use of the language with the purpose of constituting different and autonomous classifications of reality or certain parts of reality. Terminologies are not structured linguistically. They merely relate to enumerating lists of objects corresponding to the scientific delimitation of objects. Insofar as they may be structured, the structure in them does not relate to the rules of language but to the point of view and requests in the respective sciences and techniques having to do with reality, not with language.

Terminologies are not lexical fields, as one might think because they do not organize linguistic meanings but the phenomena defined by sciences. They do not organize semantic objects, that is, kinds of *designata*. They are objective classifications, not linguistic structures. In science and technique words are the substitutes of things, that is, in science the signification of words coincides with designation. The delimitations of science and techniques constitute delimitations of objective reality not delimitations in the apprehension or intuition of reality. The delimitations of science and technique,

- I. are precise and definable by objective criteria, that is, by features belonging to real things;
- II. are exclusive, that is, every term or word is different from the others, whereas linguistic oppositions are *inclusive*. On the contrary, linguistic delimitations have value insofar as they

⁵⁵ Coseriu 1985a: 95-130.

are defined because of the oppositions and functions they have, not because of the criteria they were stated or the precision of their limits.

For example, *day* includes *night* as you can see in example 27; *day* is non-marked while *night* is marked, that is, *day* functions because it opposes to *period of time* or *a while*. In this sense linguistic delimitations are *arbitrary*, that is, *free*, that is, *non-motivated* from the point of view of reality but *motivated historically*. In effect, when you say for example,

50 *The nostril of a fish.*

You do not describe the real fact of the breathing orifice of a fish. You merely describe the reality in a fish body named in a similar way as the one you name in similar to ('similar' to a certain extent) organs in animals; the question whether it is a real nostril or not, or what a kind of a nostril it is in fact, is something different. There is no identity between reality and linguistic expression. It is a new reality, the motivation of which is in *the human conscience*. Speakers when they use that expression do not mean that the organ of fishes is the same as the organ of animals. In this sense linguistic expressions are arbitrary, that is, *free and motivated only historically*. They have meaning since they function in a speech community.

In a similar way, if you say in Spanish *un abejorro* you mean the name of a species, giving the masculine gender to the semantic object denoted. But in fact the great majority of the members of that species, *bumblebees*, are females. In Spanish there exists the word *abeja* in the feminine gender, but it means quite a different primary systematization of experience by means of words of a language. With these words you denote different contents of conscience structured as to their meanings since they oppose each other. On the other hand, if in order to refer to a cat you say

51 *Felix maniculata*

You identify the thing named and referred to with the particular class of things existing in nature so that there is no possibility of altering and misinterpreting the reality meant. In this sense *felix maniculata* belongs to a particular nomenclature, differing from other words in the same nomenclature such as *felix viverrima* or *felix minuta* thus denoting other real objects. Although similar and partly the same, these expressions do not oppose one another but refer to different realities. They do not mean but merely refer to particular species of animals thus identifying the expressions with the things referred to. In science it is impossible that *felix maniculata* should oppose other categories and at the same time it is impossible that a category should include others⁵⁶.

⁵⁶ Coseriu 1981: 97.

4.1.2. *The knowledge of words and the knowledge of things.*

It is necessary to distinguish the knowledge of words (*linguistic zone*, “*zona*”, in Coseriu) and the knowledge of things (*objective sphere*, “*ámbito*” in Coseriu)⁵⁷. *Linguistic zone* is the space where a word is known and used as a linguistic sign. For example, the English words *king*, *queen*, *monarchy* is at work in the functional language dealing with the political regime in the United Kingdom. In this sense they oppose other words as *premier*, *politician*, *government*; but its boundaries are delimited linguistically. However in the functional languages dealing with the political system in America these words are not delimited linguistically, but if you say, for example,

52 *No one yet knows who is going to be the king of the USA and thus the emperor of the world, today [4.12.2000], two weeks after the election day*⁵⁸,

you give a stylistic value to the words *king* and *emperor*, since they are being used out of the required zone.

Objective sphere is the space where an object, either natural, material or immaterial, is known as an element of a domain of experience or culture but its boundaries are not linguistic. For example, in *Robinson Crusoe*, Robinson speaks of his houses, the ones he had all round the island: the houses he refers to are merely caves or huts. Thus *house* means house insofar as it refers to a reality peculiar of that objective sphere. In a similar way in *Gulliver's Travels* the things and types of things referred to mean in connection with the objective sphere defined. And this can be said in a general way of all texts particularly of literary texts.

An objective sphere can be narrower than the corresponding linguistic zone or on the contrary an objective sphere can include the corresponding linguistic zone. It can completely be alien to the linguistic zone or can coincide with it. For example, the Spanish word *soltero* belongs to a linguistic zone of Spanish but only if it is used in catholic countries. In catholic countries *soltero* is not applied of certain types of marital status (*priests*, *monks*, *nuns* and the like). In this sense the objective sphere of *soltero* is narrower than its linguistic zone, since *soltero* cannot be applied to priests⁵⁹. On the contrary, the linguistic zone and the objective sphere of words such as *book* or *table* coincide.

⁵⁷ Coseriu (Coseriu 1982: 311) distinguishes, as well, what he calls *atmosphere* (Sp. ambiente), but this type of a distinction does not have linguistic foundation. Because of this it is not necessary to see it in the study of meaning. This interpretation is by Coseriu himself, since he does not mention this type of situation when speaking of studying meaning.

⁵⁸ After the Presidential Elections in the USA in 2000 two candidates claimed them to have been elected the President. This situation lasted for longer than a month. In the end George W. Bush was acclaimed President with fewer votes than his opponent.

⁵⁹ The analysis of this word in English, *bachelor*, has been object of controversy by cognitive authors (see Lakoff 1990). Coseriu 1990 with this distinction made in 1955-56 makes it clear.

All these differences contribute to the expressive value of a word since any word used out of its sphere evokes its proper sphere. This constitutes a criterion in order to classify words as technical or non-technical. A word is technical if its sphere is narrower or alien to the zone it is used. For example in Spanish you say,

53 *El Real Madrid ganó la Champions League en el año 2000.*

Champions League is a technical word since the zone where it is used is the Spanish community. Its objective sphere in the original language, English, is wider since the combination is a linguistic combination and as such it is open to the meaning of both words forming it.

The example given by Coseriu to illustrate this is the English word *igloo*, coming from Eskimo language referring to an Eskimo object; as such it is a foreign word used in a particular objective sphere. In this way it can only be defined in connection with that objective sphere⁶⁰.

4.1.3. *The role of associations of words.*

In all linguistic communities there are associations of ideas rather than associations of words. They have to do with the opinions or beliefs of people about those things. These associations must carefully be separated from the lexematic implications of words. For example, in English *foxes* are associated with *slyness*,

54 *he is a fox, a perfect fox*

and solitude is associated with wolves,

55 *He is a lone wolf.*

These features do not belong to the structure of signification but to the association of ideas, the association of things with one another. Any object can be associated with another one usually found in the same context. For example, *pencil* and *paper*; *carpenter* and *hammer*; *home* and *comfort*; *school* and *children*. But this is nothing linguistic. These associations affect things not language. They constitute *a fact of culture*, not a fact of language. On the other hand, the limits of these associations do not coincide with language but with particular communities. For example, a typical association of this type, in England, is

56 *Elephant and castles; coat of arms.*

⁶⁰ See Coseriu 1981: 100-101; Coseriu 1982: 311-313.

Both combinations usually appear associated with pubs. Many pubs are named after expressions with no justification at all. Some combinations owe their association merely to their appearing together in the same context⁶¹. In English you say

57 *Black and white,*

with the same designation but different word-order as in Spanish,

58 *Blanco y negro.*

Associations of ideas do not always coincide in different smaller linguistic communities even within the same speech community. The example number 54 has a different meaning in Spain:

59 *Es un viejo zorro; no te fíes; es muy zorro;*

In this case the association is of the animal stated and astuteness. And even in Spain if you use the word *zorro* applied to a woman, it denotes something completely different. In Spanish you can see two different associations of things with the word *perro*,

60 *Es muy perro, no se mueve ni aunque lo maten.*

61 *Es un perro fiel. Puedes confiar en él absolutamente.*

Example 60 means the association of *perro* and slyness, and example 61 is the association of *perro* and fidelity, two different things, although not contrary to each other. And once again *perro*, in the feminine, in the following expression is associated with the liberal use of sex in reproducing manifest in the offspring, both in English and Spanish (*bitch* and *perra*), in informal speech

62 *A bitch's son; un hijo de perra*

That is, the question here is not about the meaning of the words involved but in the association of ideas, not always the same but different and sometimes contradictory with one another.

4.1.4. Linguistic structures and the structures of reality.

Some linguists think that linguistic systematizations of meaning involve subjectivity in the appreciation of things and would say that many structures of things are imprecise, involve subjectivity and imprecision. In this sense examples such as

63 *a small elephant is a big animal*

64 *a big flea is not a big animal*

⁶¹ Coseriu 1981: 101-102.

65 *a short python is not a short snake,*

are given to prove that the meaning of a language depends upon the point of view of the speaker. So they will say that the systematizations of meaning is imprecise. But these topics have nothing to do with language but with reality. Linguistic values are formal, to be defined in terms of opposition and function with others of the same functional language. Linguistic values cannot be defined in real terms or in the limits they establish, either precise or imprecise, on the phenomena of nature. The difficulty in establishing the limits in real phenomena is not a difficulty that may affect the distinction of the corresponding concepts.

On the contrary the distinction of concepts involves the establishment of limits. The limits between *day* and *night* are perfectly defined linguistically, but in real phenomena to say when it is the limit between day and night is difficult. In the same way the limits between the concepts of bird and mammal are quite definite and clear. However it is difficult to say if a kiwi is a bird or a mammal. In real phenomena you can verify features belonging to two different and opposite concepts at the same time.

Language formally delimits not only what is more or less definite from the point of view of things but all those things forming a continuum in real phenomena, for example, *yellow, green, blue, brown*. How far something is green or yellow is a topic not belonging to language but to real things. Language does not deal with structures of things but the structures imposed on things by human beings because of the human interpretation of things.

Language is arbitrary, that is, functionally aim-targeted and motivated only historically (that is, non-motivated). Language classifies reality but in accordance with human interests and attitudes. Language, the systematization of the world by language, is *subjective* by definition. The attitude of speakers, the subjective-ness of speakers, is a constitutive element of language. Subjective-ness is a linguistically objective fact. But this subjective-ness must not be confused with the subjective (either individual or traditional) non-systematized and non-lexematized appreciation of the world⁶².

The examples number 63 to 66 are to be interpreted in this way. They mean because they oppose other implicit meanings; they are individual appreciations of the world, not systematized and lexematized appreciations of the world made by the language, that is, they are individual acts of systematizing the world. Examples like these are interpreted by Aarts & Calbert establishing an intermediary level. Contextual features create a subdivision of the class animal, establishing thus two types, small animals and big animals. The expression *big animal* thus is a subclass of animal. In this sense you can apply the adjective *small* to it⁶³.

⁶² Coseriu 1981: 102-105.

⁶³ Aarts & Calbert 1979: 28.

However, the knowledge of things and ideas and opinions about things may influence the creation of sense and thus the interpretation of expressions⁶⁴. For example, the following expressions cannot be interpreted unless you know real things

66 *streetcar; street credibility; street-lamp; street value; streetwalker and streetwise.*

(meaning respectively tram; with approval by young people because you are fashionable (*he has street credibility*); street-light; the price of drugs sold illegally (*the street value of drugs is very high*); a prostitute walking in the streets in order to get customers; and someone who knows how to deal with rough people or dangerous situations, especially in big cities). That is, in every case it is necessary to know about the things referred to. That is, the knowledge of things influences the interpretation of linguistic expressions and, in a word, language.

4.2. Distinction between primary speech and meta-language

Primary speech is the type of speech used to speak about things. It deals with linguistic reality; meta-language is the speech used to speak about language itself. The things designated with meta-language are elements in primary speech or in general in a language. Thus the example

67 *the students are listening,*

belongs to primary speech. But if you say,

68 *the students are listening is a simple sentence*

belongs to meta-language. This distinction first made by Saint Augustin in the 4th century is of primary importance in semantics and grammar.

Any meaningful element of primary speech (say, a word, part of speech or any expression) can be made into the name of itself thus acting as a noun but only at the level of meta-language. In this way you say,

69 *Young is an adjective. There were eleven yeses, ten noes and two don't knows. -es is the plural of nouns. -ly is suffix forming adverbs and adjectives. Don't omit the c in perfect. I do not like this don't omit the c. I'd rather say "don't miss out your c".*

The lexemes of meta-language do not belong to lexematics since they are not structured. They are limitless nomenclatures in which any element opposes the others. Some elements of meta-language however especially if they are considered from the point of view of diachrony can be adopted as primary speech and made into elements of signification thus forming part of semantic oppositions in

⁶⁴ Coseriu 1981: 105-107.

the language⁶⁵. For example, *to say goodbye, to say prayers* in English or *un distingo, una llamada, un comunicado*, in Spanish.

4.3. Distinction between synchrony and diachrony

It is the distinction between description and history. It is the first distinction to be born in mind when you want to study language in its historically determined forms. Languages constitute historical traditions in the technique of speaking. They develop, that is, change, that is, constitute themselves historically, that is, diachronically, and function synchronically, that is, in simultaneous relationships amongst their structures. As a consequence, languages can be studied either in their development, their constituting themselves, or in their functioning. In order to describe functional linguistic structures it is necessary to study them at a particular moment of their history, that is, in synchrony. This distinction is valid for all levels of language study (phonology, morphology, syntax, semantics, text linguistics and linguistics of saying)⁶⁶. The distinction between synchrony and diachrony as far as it is conceived as the opposition between historical development and functioning, is not merely a distinction made on time premises. It is necessary to distinguish between *the synchrony of structures* and *the synchrony of language*, that is, the solidarity between the elements of a particular state of the language.

Certain functional structures can remain operative for a longer or shorter period of time. They do not always coincide with the synchrony of the language, that is, the state of the language. This means that some structures of the language have an internal synchrony going beyond the simultaneity with other structures of the language. Sometimes it is quite common to find lexical structures which are the same in the English of, say, the eighteenth century and now. However, in order to guarantee the functioning of structures in a language, for an adequate description of the particular language it is necessary to restrict the study of language to a state of the language.

On the other hand, a state of the language is not strictly synchronic. The idiomatic knowledge of speakers and the possibilities of performance in a particular language go beyond the actual reality of language. This is especially manifest in languages with a long tradition in literature in which speakers use forms, structures and oppositions no longer in use. This manifests in archaic words and expressions. For example, in English, Robert Lacey & Danny Danziger in 1999 wrote

⁶⁵ Coseriu 1985a: 107-109.

⁶⁶ The traditional levels of linguistic study are said to be four, namely, phonology, morphology, syntax and meaning. From my point of view these levels are not enough. Today after the proposal by Coseriu of text linguistics thus introducing the study of texts in linguistics and after my proposal of introducing saying as a branch of linguistics I defend that language study will be complete if both proposals are added to language study. As a consequence the levels of linguistic study are six: phonology, morphology, syntax, meaning, text and saying.

70 *If King Ethelred the Unred -Ethelred the Unready- had died in or around the year 1000, he might have had a reputation to match that of his distinguished forbear Athelstan, the first king of all Engla-lond.*

In this paragraph there appears a word belonging to Old English in particular to the Mercian variety of Old English. The expression *Engla-lond* was the combination of *Engla*, the genitive plural of *Engle* thus meaning “of the English”; and *lond*, the head-word, playing the function of determining the genitive, a Mercian variety co-existing with West-Saxon *land*, the whole expression meaning “the land of the English”. This expression is no longer Modern English but can easily be understood by speakers.

If these expressions are considered to belong to styles of the language these styles are to be defined diachronically. Every structure must be established in its synchrony, that is, in its functioning not in the state of the language as a whole. To describe the state of the language in its integrity would mean to identify different and autonomous functional structures and modes. The description of every structure must be made in its own synchrony but the description of the state of the language must register the plurality of the different synchronies implicit in it or in an expression, that is, it must establish the diachronic differences known and used by speakers. For a speaker of English today, it is very easy to identify such an expression as belonging to their past. In lexematics and at all levels of linguistic study it is necessary to restrict the object of study to a *state of the language*: it is necessary to guarantee the simultaneity of the functioning of the structures going to be described.

An adequate and complete description of language means to select a state of the language (synchrony) and state other parallel states of the language. It consists in describing the state of the language selected and at the same time describing the diachronic differences coexisting in the state of the language selected⁶⁷.

4.4. Distinction between the technique of speaking and repeated speech

In a state of the language, that is, within synchrony, it is necessary to distinguish *the technique of speaking* and *repeated speech*. A language is above all a historical technique for any possible speech, that is, a historical tradition in the technique of speaking. But linguistic traditions, that is, languages are far from being simple. They contain not only a technique to create speech, a technique of speaking, but they at the same time contain chunks of speech already performed thus acting with definite meaning and function. In this sense they can be used again at different levels of the concrete speech structure.

⁶⁷ Coseriu 1985a: 109-113.

The technique of speaking encompasses lexical and grammar units (lexemes, catememes, morphemes) and rules for the modification and combination of those units in a sentence, that is, words, instruments to form words and expressions and lexical and grammatical proceedings.

Repeated speech encompasses everything that from a traditional point of view is fixed as an expression, idiom or a set phrase. It encompasses everything the components of which cannot be substituted for or re-combined in accordance with the rules existing at the moment of speaking. For example, in English you say expressions such as *in the old days*, or *in the old times*, and as such *old* belongs to the technique of speaking thus combining it with other words different from *day* and *time*, such as *moment* or *year* and many other words. Moreover, the old form of *old*, *olden*, is no longer an expression that can be said to belong to present day English. It cannot be combined with any other elements since it is no longer in use in the language. However sometimes there are some expressions in which you can find the old form,

71 *in the olden days and in the olden times.*

But you cannot combine *olden* with other words, nor can you alter the order and the type of combination, as in

72 * *the olden books, the olden houses or those days are olden*

The units of repeated speech are chunks of speech introduced as fixed in speech. Other examples

73 *His visits are few and far between*

74 *He went through thick and thin to raise his family*

75 *The long and the short of it is that everything is over.*

76 *The sitting members of Parliament, after this election, are very few.*

In these cases you cannot use elements of the expressions above, and say for example *his visits are far between*, or *the long is that some moments are left, and the *short is that few moments are left, or *the members of Parliament are sitting after this election*. These combinations have sense because they form a lexical unit, and you cannot destroy the combination.

Sometimes parts of these expressions can be adapted. For example

77 *to wait for a dead man's shoes*

means to wait for an advantage to happen with somebody's death but in films of gangsters you may have heard menacing expressions like,

78 *Your shoes, mind your shoes!*

That is, the words in the idiom are operative insofar as they refer the whole idiom and as a consequence you can use part of the elements of the idiom. Similarly

79 *to lead someone by the nose*

means to make someone do anything you wish him to do. You can say in a particular context after having said the expression,

80 *His nose must be quite large since he is easily led by.*

But in the great majority of cases these chunks of speech have elements no longer understandable, elements having been built in accordance with rules no longer in use. For example,

81 *Boxing Day; to and fro; ill gotten gains; to cross swords.*

Examples, like these represent elements of a previous state of the language no longer in use.

In principle only the manifestation of the technique of speaking can be analysed synchronically. As a consequence only the technique of speaking can be structured. The elements of fixed expressions cannot be analysed; they escape from all possible structure. In this way they cannot be the object of either grammar or lexicology.

But the units of repeated speech considered as such units can be analysed, combined and substituted for in accordance with the rules of the technique of speaking. Coseriu distinguishes three types:

- a) those equivalent to sentences. Certain units of repeated speech can only be substituted for sentences. For example, the English expression *for good or ill* in

82 *For good or ill, I've booked a hotel room.*

This idiom can be substituted for “whatever may happen”;

- b) those equivalent to phrases. For example, *high and dry* in

83 *Mary was left high and dry,*

that is, Mary was abandoned;

84 *They buried the hatchet,*

that is, they made friends again after a quarrel or fight;

c) those equivalent to a word⁶⁸. For example

85 *he made short work of the food,*

that is, he ate it up without delay;

86 *it is a storm in a teacup,*

that is, it is something trivial and unimportant;

87 *he is a tower of strength,*

that is, he is faithful.

4.5. Distinction between the architecture and structure of the language

As we saw earlier, the synchronic technique of speaking corresponding to a historical language is not unitary. A historical language is a complex of systems. The different systems (phonological, grammatical [morphological and syntactic], lexical, textual and the one dealing with saying) in a historical language are partly divergent and partly similar but historically related to one another. In a historical language you can find *variety* (diatopic, diastratic, and diaphasic differences) and *homogeneity* (syntopic, synestratic and symphasic differences).

A historical language is a kind of unit, a complex of dialects, levels and styles of speech thus constituting a technique. But this technique is not unitary either. It is unitary from only one point of view (one set of differences).

A homogeneous language from the point of view of the three sets of differences (syntopic, synestratic and symphasic) is a *functional language*.

The differences relating to the three types of variety are to be found at all levels of language study (phonology, morphology, syntax, vocabulary or lexis, text and the one dealing with saying). The differences determined by diatopic differences are particularly interesting in those languages, like English or Spanish, spoken in different territories. For example, in Scottish English you can find the following words

88 *Aiver, bairn, bawbee, bedesman, bedral, blackavised, bowk, brae, brigg, carle, chield, deil, ee, fell.*

⁶⁸ Coseriu 1981: 113-118.

relating to Standard English: *aiver* (carthorse), *bairn* (child), *bawbee* (halfpenny), *bedesman* (pensioner, almsman), *bedral* (deadly), *blackavised* (dark-complexioned), *bowk* (bulk), *brae* (bank, brow of hill), *brigg* (bridge), *carle* (fellow, peasant), *chield* (child, fellow), *deil* (devil), *ee* (eye), *fell* (fierce).

Differences in the architecture of the language are to be born in mind when you study any level of language, especially if you study the lexical level. These differences cannot be studied unless they are studied in a functional language. The concept of architecture of the language and structure of the language must not be confused. In the architecture of the language you can find variety and diversity; in the structure of the language you can find opposition and homogeneity. In the architecture of the language you will find analogous signifiers for different meanings. For example, *mad* in British English (meaning fool) and *mad* in American English (meaning, angry). In the architecture of the language at the same time you will find analogous meanings expressed with different signifiers; example, the words in 88.

In this sense if you study Scottish English you must set the differences between *bairn* and *chield*, that is, the opposition existing between them, but first you must separate both of them as belonging to the particular functional language, the functional language of Scottish English as distinct from Standard English, another functional language.

In this sense you can say that the object of lexematics is the functional language. Linguistic description must necessarily be functional. Oppositions must be established and described within the functional language. The description of the different structures studied on the other hand must be made as many times as the terms studied are found in different structures⁶⁹. In this sense you cannot say that *mad* conveys only one meaning since you can find it in opposition to *fool* in British English and in opposition to *cross* or *incensed* in American English. The structural description of a language, however, does not involve ignoring the variety in the architecture of the language. It means merely establishing and describing all oppositions within the functional language they belong to.

4.6. Distinction between the system of the language and the norm of the language

As we saw earlier, the technique of speaking implicit in the functional language is structured at four levels: *speech, the norm of the language, the system of the language, and the type of the language*.

At the level of speech you can find variants of lexical units such as phonetic variants. In the same way you can find situational variants since the lexis functions as well in connection with non-linguistic contexts and designates these contexts. In this sense in lexematics it is interesting to

⁶⁹ See Coseriu 1981: 118-123.

establish these classes of variants. For example, for the meaning “behaving gently and caring about other people”, “willing to help “ you can have the following words or expressions

89 *Kind: she is the kindest and most generous person I've ever seen*

90 *Be good to: she is very good to her friends and companions*

91 *Considerate: she is the most considerate person you can meet and will do her best not to disturb you in any way.*

92 *Kind-hearted: as kind-hearted as she was, she felt sorry for beggars and the destitute of fortune.*

93 *One's heart is in the right place: although ill-mannered his heart was in the right place.*

All these expressions can be analysed as possible variants in a particular text, that is, as possibilities of expression at the level of speech. But the value of these expressions and the differences worth considering in a particular text are to be established in terms of the value they have in the language. That is, the value they have in speech is a direct application of the value they have in the language.

The levels really important in lexicology are *the norm of the language* and *the system of the language*. Lexical oppositions are given in the norm of the language. They constitute *facts of the norm of a language*.

In the technique of speaking all words either compound or simple, possible in the system of the language, exist virtually. This means that the existence or real non-existence of a possible lexical unit from the point of view of the system of the language constitutes a fact of the norm of the language. Sometimes certain coinages of words and certain derivations do not follow the order established in a language but are formed in accordance with rules involving a missing word. It is the case, for example, in Spanish, of the reality referring to someone in his or her thirties. You have the following words

94 *veinteañero, cuarentón, cincuentón, quintañón.*

But for the equivalent reality, **treintañero*, you have no word. No lexicalized word refers to the fact that someone is in his or her thirties. In a similar way in Spanish you have the expression,

95 *Leche desnatada.*

But you do not have the corresponding **leche natada* or the verb **natar*. In English you have the expression,

96 *A milch cow; a milch goat.*

But the word *milch* is not used to mean the reality denoted in the expression since the usual word to convey that meaning is *milk*.

In English the following words mean the reality of female human beings: *woman, womanhood, womanish, womanise, womankind, womanly*. However the language does not have an exact equivalence to mean the reality of male human beings: *man, manhood, mannish, *manize, mankind, manly*; but *mankind* does not refer to males but humanity. Similarly you have *to man*, but not **to woman*. That is, there is no symmetry and there is no reason for it to be. In Spanish you say *comedor* when you could very well say *comedero*. On the contrary, *comedero* refers to the place where animals are fed or instruments used to feed animals.

The norm of the language intervenes in most cases to delimit and fix the meanings given in the system of the language. For example, the meaning of,

97 *book-keeping*,

represents an use not central to the combination but a mere possibility in the system of the language specified by use in the norm of the language thus being fixed. It is a back-formation formed out of the combination *a book-keeper*.

The relative frequency in the case of selection of synonyms is a fact of norm. For example, the words,

98 *good-looking; beautiful; pretty; handsome*,

mean the same. They are said of people. But it is a fact of the norm of the language to apply *beautiful* and *pretty* to women, and *good-looking* and *handsome* to men.

Set phrases, association of ideas and idioms belong to the norm of the language. They constitute chunks of speech traditionally fixed. For example,

99 *women and children*,

(why not children and women?);

100 *to and fro*,

(why not fro and to?);

101 *secuela de muerte*,

(why not secuela mortal?);

102 *hermanos de sangre*,

(why not hermanos sanguíneos?);

103 *ángulo de vision,*

(why not ángulo visionario?).

A particularly interesting case of a fact of the norm of the language is the use of certain meanings in particular circumstances. It is the case of traditional fixations having to do with designation. In all these cases there is a preference for a particular word against others of the same designation. For example, *land*, *earth* and *country* mean the same in most cases. However if you speak of property you use *land*,

104 *five acres of land;*

if you speak of the weather you use *land*,

105 *in this zone lie the dry lands of Hopi people.*

When you speak of the administration and delimitation of it you use *country*,

106 *the gap between poor and rich countries;*

and if you have a cosmic vision you use *earth*,

107 *the oceans cover 70% of the earth's surface.*

These preferences are particularly important when they reflect the social, political, cultural or historical attitudes of a speech community.

The real extent of the use of the distinction between the norm of the language and the system of the language in a particular language is one of the most important facts in the study of a language. For example, in English there exists the noun *truth* and the adjective *true*, the same as the corresponding Spanish words *verdad* and *verdadero*. However in Spanish the noun is more usual than the adjective,

108 *es verdad.*

In English it is the adjective,

109 *it is true.*

That is, the higher frequency of the noun *verdad* constitutes a fact of the norm of the language in Spanish whereas in English the higher frequency of the adjective *true*.

As a general rule, describing a language means describing not only the system of the language but the norm of the language as well. It is necessary to know the rules of the application of the system of the language in accordance with situations and contexts.

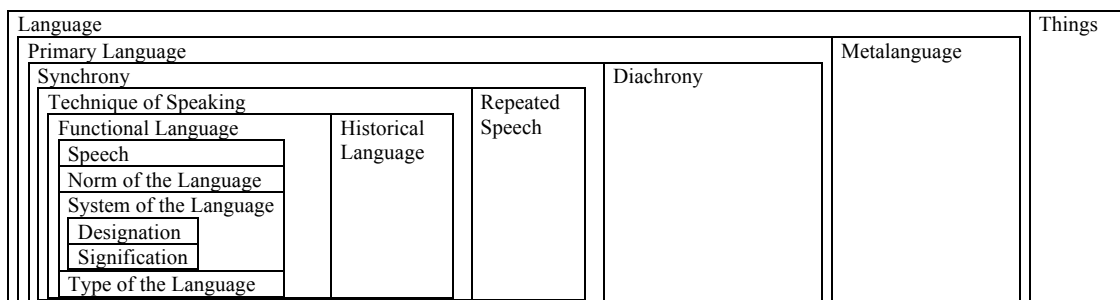
In lexematics it is necessary to study both the norm of the language and the system of the language. That is, it is necessary to do a *lexicology of the norm of the language* together with a *lexicology of the system of the language*⁷⁰.

4.7. Distinction between relationships of signification and relationships of designation.

As we saw earlier the different relationships of signification conveyed by lexemes are called lexematic relationships of signification. Relationships of signification and relationships of designation are different since only relationships of signification are structured. The particular designation of an object is a fact of speech. On the contrary, the signification given by a lexeme is a fact of language, that is, *a fact of the technique of speaking*.

The distinction between designation and signification, that is, between the thing referred to and the meaning conveyed is the first asset to be made in semantics. Semantics, the study of meaning, and lexematics, the structural study of the meaning of lexemes, deal with the structure of signification. It is just in the relationships of signification, the relationships of opposition or solidarity of lexemes, that you can find meaning. The meaning of lexemes is defined in terms of the oppositions they convey when they function.

The seven distinctions to be made in lexematics have been systematized by Geckeler⁷¹, a disciple of Coseriu's, in the hierarchy established in the following diagram,



With this the object of lexematics is perfectly delimited. Analysis must discover lexematic structures by means of these distinctions. It must discover what belongs to language and what does

⁷⁰ Coseriu 1981: 123-130.

⁷¹ Geckeler 1976: 229.

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not belong to language. Lexematics thus is the discipline studying the structure of meaning of a language.

5. The value of function, methods and lexical units in lexematics.

5.1. The value of functional oppositions.

In order to make up functional lexematics it is necessary to base the analysis on *functional oppositions*. This is the most immediate consequence of the opposition between architecture of the language and the structure of the language. Functional oppositions can only be found within a functional language in the elements manifesting themselves in the structure of a language, that is, elements constituting *significatum* not *designata*. This means that the elements of a language, that is, lexemes in the case of lexematics, must be analysed as they bear meaning when they function, that is, when they manifest functional oppositions (paradigmatic axis of opposition) or constitute functional solidarities with other elements they are combined with (syntagmatic axis of combination). This, in turn, means that lexemes, elements bearing the lexical function, cannot be analysed in themselves, but in the opposition or solidarity they manifest when they function.

5.2. The value of contents.

The first condition of functional semantics is to start with the point of view of contents. This is something to be born in mind in the analysis of the relationships between the two aspects of linguistic signs, signifier and signified. In accordance with this one can find four lexicological disciplines⁷².

5.2.1. *Lexicology of expression.*

It is the analysis of the different relationships of signification within the level of expression, that is, the relationships of signification between the different signifiers. This discipline has to do with the analysis of the relationships of signification established with the different elements. In this sense if you analyse, for example, the English word *lie*, you can see that it is in connection with two verbs, one *(to) lie*, usually followed by *down* or *on*; and the other, *(to) lie*, with the meaning to say something untrue deliberately. The first verb forms the past in *lay* and the past participle in *lain*. The second verb, *lie*, forms the past and past participle in *lied*. The past form of the first *lie* is different from the verb *(to) lay*. On the other hand *lie* is to be distinguished from the noun *lie*, which is in direct connection with the second verb *lie*. In order to do things clearer you can name the first verb, *lie*¹, and the second one *lie*². *Lie*¹ comes from OE *licgan*, *liþ*, *lég*, *légon*, *legen*, while *lie*² comes from OE *lēogan*, *lēaþ*, *lēah*, *lugon*, *logen*, etc. You can carry on analysing all differences present in this word: you can analyse the changes these words have suffered, the continuity they manifest in history and so on. That is, this type of an analysis has to do with lexicology of expression.

You can represent the conclusions got through this analysis in the following diagram:

Lexeme	Category	Past	Past participle	Gerund	Origin
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⁷² Coseriu 1981: 47.

Lie ¹	Verb	Lay	Lain	Lying	Licgan
Lie ²	Verb	Lied	Lied	Lying	Leogan
Lay	Verb	Laid	Laid	Laying	
Lie	Noun				

Rhyme dictionaries and inverted dictionaries are the lexicographical applications of this discipline.

5.2.2. *Lexicology of contents.*

It is the analysis of the different relationships of signification within the level of contents, that is, the relationships of signification between lexical meanings. For example, the word *lie*. The analysis from the point of view of lexicology of contents consists in analyzing the meanings given by the word *lie*. At first sight you have to say that there are three words, different from one another. *Lie*₁, *lie*₂ and *lie*₃ are to be analysed separately since they convey different meanings and belong to different classes and different lexical fields. *Lie*₃ although it is in direct connection with *lie*₂ cannot be studied here since it conveys a different category meaning. In this sense you have to select *lie*₁ and neglect the other two (*lie*₂ and *lie*₃). So we are going to study only verb *lie*₁, now to be referred to simply as *lie*.

Lie is in opposition to *lie down*, *stretch out*, *sprawl out*, *recline*. It is to be combined with a semantic object expressed in a noun, meaning either a living being or a stretch of land. This combination manifests itself in two different uses: *lie*¹ and *lie*², two conventional denominations with no connection with the analysis in the previous paragraph. *Lie*¹ is applied of living beings thus conveying meaning proper of human beings. In this sense you can say

110 *He was gravely ill so he lied down on bed.*

111 *He lay on his back*

112 *The child lay on the floor*

The analysis of sentences like these evinces the use of the verb *lie*. It is to be combined with preposition *down* compulsorily but to display all the information given in it it is to be used with preposition *on*. More accurately: *lie down* is a semantic unit, and to express the adjunct of place *lie*¹ is to be combined with preposition *on*. The adjunct of place can denote two things: either the physical place or the part of the body affected. This difference, however, does not constitute a special use in itself, that is, it does not affect the word functionally since it affects merely an extension of the state of affairs denoted.

At the level of combination as well *lie*¹ is not to be complemented with an object. It is an intransitive verb not admitting an object but it is to be complemented adverbially in an adjunct denoting the manner the verb conveys its meaning. In this way you can say,

113 *He lay comfortably on his chair.*

On the contrary *lie*² is applied of particular semantic objects to be characterized, in contrast with living beings, as non-mobile. It is the case of

114 The province of Almeria lies in the South of Spain.

*Lie*² is different from *lie*¹ since *lie*¹ is to be applied of living or human beings, [+LIVING], whereas *lie*² is to be applied of non-mobile concrete semantic objects, [+CONCRETE: land] that is, countries and lands.

That is, in lexicology of contents you analyse all oppositions and solidarities of a lexeme found in the functioning of it. You can analyse more aspects, for example, the changes in meaning that have affected the meaning of a lexeme in history both syntagmatically and paradigmatically.

Lexicology of contents, bearing in mind the different types of relationships of signification in lexemes, can be divided into two disciplines, the syntagmatics of contents and the paradigmatics of contents, depending on the type of relationship of signification analysed.

In order to make clear the analysis made so far you can represent the conclusions in this analysis in the following diagram:

Lexemes	Paradigmatics of contents	Syntagmatics of contents	
	(oppositional relationship)	(Adjunct: place)	(Adjunct: part affected)
Lie	+	Down	On
Lie	+		In
Stretch out	+		
Sprawl out	+		
Recline	+		

Dictionaries of synonyms and antonyms represent the application of this discipline.

5.2.3. *Semasiology*.

It is the analysis of the two levels of signification, signifier and signified, starting with the level of expression⁷³. In this sense the lexeme *lie* is analysed in alphabetical order with other words, either if they convey the same meaning or not. In this sense, for example, *lie* is to be put together with *lido*, *lief*, *liege*, although they do not bear on each other. *Lido* was the name of a bathing-place near Venice thus conveying the meaning of a public open-air swimming pool; *lief* is an old-fashioned adjective meaning beloved or dear; *liege* is an archaic word meaning someone entitled to feudal service, *a liege lord*, or someone bound to that service, *a liege man*; etc.

⁷³ Coseriu 1981: 49.

Ordinary dictionaries are made in this way. Words are dealt with in alphabetical order, no matter the category they have or the meaning they convey.

5.2.4. *Onomasiology*.

It is the analysis of the two levels of signification starting with the level of meaning, that is, the level of *significatum*. Structural semantics or lexematics relates to lexicology of contents. Lexematics encompasses semantic lexicology of the norm of the language and semantic lexicology of the system of the language. So the level of expression, that is, signifiers, must be treated just as the expression of the meaning they convey, that is, as the manifestation and guarantee of the existence of meaning⁷⁴. See an onomasiological analysis of words in Appendix I.

5.3. The problem of lexematics.

As with phonology and morphology the basic problem of lexematics or structural semantics is to delimit the basic structures constituting the system of signification of a language. It is necessary to find out and delimit the functional units, functional oppositions and functional relationships they keep with one another. Functional units appear forming groups, partly different and partly the same, thus working as opposite members of those groups. Lexical structures bid the opportunity of analysing functional units in differing and distinctive features, thus stressing and systematizing the oppositions in series of cases. In this way a relatively small number of opposite features can structure and organize a complete system.

5.4. The value of form.

Structural lexical analysis must be based on strictly objective criteria of linguistic form, that is, on criteria based on the signifiers of words and their meanings. Since the criterion to determine the meaning of a lexeme is the oppositions and relationships of solidarity manifest in the function played, the only two possible methods applicable to this analysis is *commutation* and *distribution*.

Commutation consists in changing one lexeme for another in a particular combination. For example the verb in,

115 *He lay comfortably on his chair,*

lay can be replaced for *recline* or *sit*, but not for *stretch out* or *sprawl out*.

Distribution consists in finding out the different possibilities of combination a lexeme can have. For example, we have analysed *lie* with the double kind of semantic object it can be combined, either with a semantic object denoting living beings or an immobile semantic object such as land or country.

⁷⁴ Coseriu 1981: 50.

On the other hand *lie* can have a double specification in the adjunct it admits, specified with preposition *on* or *in*.

Commutation can be applied without distribution but not the contrary. Distribution is particularly meaningful in connection with solidarities.

5.5. Lexical units: the lexeme.

The study of meaning or semantics constitutes a level in the study of language. In the study of language you can see the following levels:

- I. *Phonology*, the study of sounds of a language,
- II. *Morphology*, the study of the formation of words,
- III. *Syntax*, the combination of words. Both morphology and syntax are usually referred to as *grammar*;
- IV. *Lexematics*, the structural study of meaning of words;
- V. *Text linguistics*, the study and interpretation of sense; and
- VI. *Linguistics of saying* or the study of the meaningful intentional purpose of the individual speaker.

The first thing to do in the study of every one of these levels of study is to define the type of unit to be adopted. In every case and following the principles of structuralism it is necessary to find out the smallest functional unit in the respective level of study. In this way you can find the *phoneme*, *morpheme*, the *phrase* (in Sp. *sintagma*), *lexeme*, *sentence*, *text* and *the object of saying* (as opposing *the object of knowledge*), respectively.

Some of these units, *phoneme*, *morpheme*, *phrase*, *lexeme*, *sentence*, *text* or the *object of saying* are functional units, that is, they can bear meaning insofar as they function and because they function, but they are not independent, that is, they are not free —remember that Bloomfield defined a word as a *free unit*. As functional units they are constituted with a set of features, with different names depending on the discipline they belong to. A *phoneme* is constituted with a set of *allophones* or variants, or features constituting the phoneme; a *morpheme* with a set of *allomorphs*; a phrase is constituted with a set of words grouped in a nucleus; a *lexeme* is constituted with a set of *semes* or meaningful features; and a *sentence* may be constituted with several phrases, etc. In this sense a lexeme can be decomposed in its component *features* or *semes*.

The semes of a lexeme are in complementary distribution within the structure of the lexeme, that is, they all participate and complement one another in order to denote the meaning of the set of units we call a *lexeme*. The analysis of lexemes thus requires the division of their meaning in smaller elements or *semes* or *features*. The formulation of these semes sometimes requires long expressions. In this way you can analyse the adjective *honest*, for example, and say that it is a lexeme constituted

with the set, *honest*={ [+HUMAN] + [BEHAVE] + [TRUTHFULLY] }. That is, you have formulated semes in a simple way, but sometimes a whole expression is required to express the idea representing the feature.

In the structure of signification of lexemes it is necessary to distinguish the *seme* or feature referring to the lexical class from the other semes⁷⁵. The first one is the *classeme* and the others constitute the *specific semes*. The classeme, since it defines a lexical class has to do with syntagmatic relationships in the lexeme. Because of this it is to be represented in capital letters. In the specific semes you can find the seme defining the lexeme in question paradigmatically and the specification or determination of the seme defining the lexeme paradigmatically. In the example referred to above the lexeme *honest* is constituted with the *classeme* [+HUMAN] specified with the other semes or *specific semes*, [BEHAVE] and [truthfully]. Since lexemes form part of larger lexematic structures the seme defining the lexeme paradigmatically is common to many other lexemes thus forming a lexical field. Because of this I usually write both the classeme and the specific semes, that is, the one common in a lexical field in capital letters. The lexeme *honest* is to be analysed from a lexematic point of view as

Honest = { [+HUMAN] + [BEHAVING] + [truthfully] }

To be simplified as

Honest = { [+HUMAN] + [BEHAVING: truthfully] }

That is, the structure of a lexeme is to be described as the set of features, represented with the symbols {}, and the different features or semes, to be represented with square brackets [] or slashes //, as follows, lexeme¹ = { [+CLASSEME] + [SPECIFIC SEME] + [specification of the specific seme] } (see the analysis of the lexical field of adjectives of *courage and fear*, Appendix I and II).

⁷⁵ Pottier 1974.

6. Lexematic structures.

Lexical units, *lexemes*, are structured in larger systems called *lexematic structures*. Lexical units, made up of signifier + signified can be structured in three ways:

- 1) structure of expression only
- 2) structure of expression and contents and
- 3) structure of contents only.

The first one is a structure relating to signifiers in general. Because of this the structure of expression has no connection with lexematics. The second one, the parallel structure to expression and contents, is based on the assumption that the lexicon of a language is materially regular, that is, that there is *analogy* between the level of contents and the level of expression in linguistic signs. But this analogical parallelism has no application in the lexicon, that is, there is not such a parallelism, not even in grammar. A really coherent structure of lexicon is the structure of contents. Lexematics distinguishes what belongs to the structure of signification as far as it is a structure of contents. Only the structures having to do with the structural relationships of lexical signification within a functional language are lexematic⁷⁶.

Lexematic structures can be either paradigmatic or syntagmatic. Paradigmatic structures are constituted with lexical units in opposition of one another in the axis of selection. They can be either primary or secondary depending on the kind of dependence in their members. A lexematic structure is primary if one of the members in the structure of signification determines or implies the others or if the implication in them is unidirectional; otherwise the lexematic structure is secondary.

6.2. Primary lexematic paradigmatic structures.

There are two primary lexematic structures: *the lexical field* and *the lexical class*. The lexical field is *oppositional*. The lexical class together with syntagmatic structures is *relational*, that is, the lexical class is based on the total or partial identity of the lexemes involved.

6.2.1. *The lexical field.*

A lexical field is a set of lexemes linked together with a common lexical value. For example, the lexical value of adjectives such as *young, new, old, adolescent, teenage, childish, mature, brand-new, ancient, antique*, etc. is the feature [AGE], that is, they all include in their signification the value [AGE]⁷⁷. Because of this they all are to be defined as belonging to the *adjectival lexical field of age*. A

⁷⁶ Coseriu 1981: 169.

⁷⁷ The expressions in between square brackets refer to features of meaning or *semes*.

lexical field can further be divided into particular values opposing one another by minimum content differences (features or *semes*)⁷⁸. For example, *old* opposes both *young* and *new*; *old* opposes *mature*, *ancient*, and *antique*; *young* opposes *adolescent*, *teenage*, *childish*; *new* opposes *mature*, *brand-new*, *ancient*, *antique*; *ancient* opposes *antique*.

Any lexical field can be represented by an *archilexematic word* or *archilexeme*, corresponding to the unitary value of the lexical field but its grammatical existence is not usually necessary. For example, the meaning of *old* is implicit in all adjectives meaning age either meaning of [+HUMAN] or [-HUMAN], [+ABSTRACT] and concrete [-ABSTRACT]. So this adjective can be said to represent all adjectives of age, that is, *old* represents the archilexeme of the lexical field. At the same time you can separate two great groups or areas of signification in the lexical field, those meaning of [+HUMAN] and those meaning of [+CONCRETE], correspondingly *young* and *new*. In the case of *adjectives of age* there exists in the language a word (*old*) representing both areas of signification. But sometimes there is no word representing all meanings in the lexical field. It is the case of adjectives meaning *courage and fear*, thus constituting two areas of signification correspondingly represented with the archilexemes *brave* and *cowardly*.

In a lexical field both types of relationships of signification are to be found, paradigmatic and syntagmatic. In adjectives paradigmatic relationships are to be found in the value of the lexical field; syntagmatic relationships can be found both in the classeme and in the usage proper of it, the grammatical regime of the lexeme. For example, the adjective *pregnant* is applied of [+HUMAN/+ANIMAL: feminine] is followed with different prepositions: *At that time she was pregnant with Peter by her deceased husband*. That is, the prepositions *with* and *by* manifest as well the syntagmatic relationships of signification played by the adjective *pregnant*.

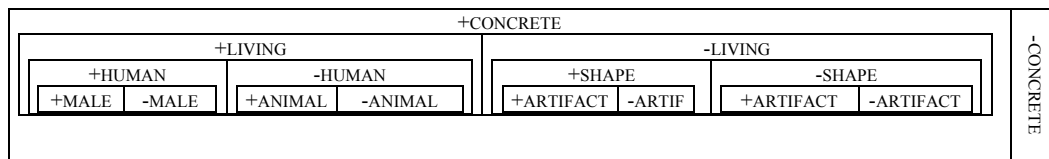
Lexical fields admit different levels of organization and sometimes a lexical field at a particular level can be included as a unit in another lexical field of a higher rank. For example, the adjectival lexical field *courage & fear* is to be included within a larger lexical field, the adjectival lexical field of *behaviour*; and this one within the larger lexical field of adjectives of *human*; and this one within the lexical field of adjectives of *living*; and this one in the lexical field of adjectives of *concrete*, as opposing adjectives of *abstract* (for a hierarchy of lexical fields of adjectives see Appendix III).

A lexical field can be defined as a unit of signification representing a particular semantic value in the language structured in accordance with different relationships of signification both paradigmatic and syntagmatic.

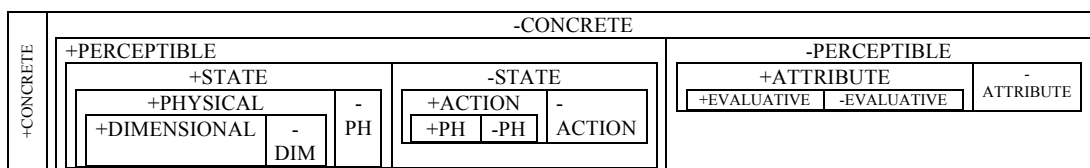
⁷⁸ Coseriu 1981: 135.

6.2.2. The lexical class.

A *lexical class* is the totality of lexemes that, independent from the lexical field they belong to, are connected with a distinctive common feature. A lexical class manifests in the grammatical and lexical distribution of a lexeme. That is, all lexemes belonging to the same lexical class function similarly from the grammatical and lexical points of view: they can perform analogous grammatical functions and can appear in analogous grammatical or lexical combinations. In this sense in Spanish and English you can find nominal lexical classes of *concrete*, *abstract*, *living*, *non-living*, *human*, *non-human*; adjectival lexical classes of *positive*, *negative*; verbal lexical classes of *transitivity*, *non-transitivity*, *ergativity*, *non-ergativity*, etc⁷⁹. These lexical classes can be divided into smaller groups. For example, the nominal lexical class of *human* can have [+HUMAN: male and [+HUMAN: female]. And if you analyse the different lexical classes stated you can see that they can be organized in a hierarchy. Aarts & Calbert 1979 analysed words in terms of the features they represent. These features relate to *semes*. They distinguish two types of features, higher-level primary features and secondary features. Higher-level primary features are very similar to what Coseriu calls lexical classes—at least in connection with the analysis of adjectives—, although they are structured on logical reasons. Moreover, their classification is quite illustrative, and can be used in the analysis of words to a certain extent. Aarts & Calbert 1979 start with the feature [±CONCRETE], that is, a *classeme* representing all concrete things and together with it another *classeme* representing all abstract things. The following table represents [+CONCRETE].



In the same sense, abstract, that is, [-CONCRETE] can be divided into other types of features. The features in [-CONCRETE] are represented in the following diagram:



Adapted from Aarts & Calbert 1979, 18.

These higher-level primary features, proposed by Aarts & Calbert 1979, can be used as a guide to identify lexical classes (or classemes). But remember: the structural analysis of meaning must be based on linguistic criteria, not on logic. It must find out the relationships of signification in lexemes.

⁷⁹ Coseriu 1981: 146-147.

The problem now is to analyse whether this classification represents the structure of signification of words in a language or if it represents a classification of concepts based on logical reasons. As I said above, the purpose of lexematics is to analyse the structure of signification of words and not the possible logical implications that some general concepts may have.

Based on this classification and having in mind the relationships of signification in the lexical meaning of adjectives, I made the hierarchy of the lexical fields of adjectives, appearing in Appendix III.

The semantic feature defining a lexical class is a *classeme*⁸⁰. For example, the features or *semes* defining the lexical classes determining the lexemes of the adjectival lexical field of *courage & fear* is [+HUMAN] on the one hand and [-CONCRETE: *situation*] or [ABSTRACT: *situation*] on the other. In this sense you have to separate some lexemes in the lexical field from others.

There are two types of lexical classes: *determining* and *determined*. *Determining* lexical classes constitute *classemes*, that is, semes determining and conditioning the meaning they appear in. For example, *human being, concrete, abstract, living, non-living*, etc. are lexemes but at the same time constitute a classeme appearing in the structure of signification of other lexemes. *Determined* lexical classes are those lexical classes defined by features peculiar of those lexical classes. For example, the verbs *eat, sleep, snore, beget, bear (a baby)* are determined by the lexical class or classeme [+ANIMAL]. *Smile, laugh, create* belong to a lexical class determined by the lexical class [+HUMAN], etc. The great majority of adjectives in the lexical field of *courage & fear* belong to a lexical class determined by the lexical class [+HUMAN], namely, *afraid, alarming, apprehensive, assertive, audacious, bloodcurdling, bold, brave, brazen, courageous, daring, fearless, gallant, heroic, high-spirited, intrepid, public-spirited, spirited, valiant, afraid, apprehensive, cowardly, fearful, frightened, low-spirited, pacniky, scared, timorous, shy, terrified*; but a few are determined by the classeme [-CONCRETE] specified with [-CONCRETE: *situation*]. See Appendix I and Appendix II for a representation of the adjectival lexical field of *courage and fear*.

6.3. Secondary paradigmatic lexematic structures.

There are three types: modification, development and composition.

6.3.1. *Modification.*

It is also called homogeneous derivation. It is a kind of complementary determination of the meaning of a lexeme. It can be represented as {lexeme A=lexeme A +determination}⁸¹. For example, the meaning of the independent lexeme *jovencito* in Spanish is the meaning of, *jovencito* = {*joven*+ [LEVEL OF SPEECH: deprecatory speech]}. In English *usherette* is the meaning of,

⁸⁰ Coseriu 1981: 147.

⁸¹ Coseriu 1981: 137.

usherette={*usher* + feminine determination}. These modifications should not be confused with regular word formation processes in certain words, for example, Spanish adjectives, as *alto-alta*; *bajo-bajito*. However with certain nouns this is possible since the addition of the feminine morpheme relates to a new class of semantic objects. This can be seen even when you have different words, for example, Latin *homo*, *mulier* and *vir*. *Mulier*={*homo+femina*} and *vir*={*homo+ masculus*}.

The meanings of the elements of modification differ from distinctive features of lexemes in the fact that these can be added to all lexemes in a lexical field, at least theoretically. The meanings of the elements of modification at the same time go beyond the limits of a lexical field.

6.3.2. *Development*.

It is the relationship of signification established in lexemes stating the same fact of experience but from different points of view. It can be expressed as {lexeme A + category meaning}. Example, *young*, *youth*; *age*, *grow*, *old*, *to grow old*; Spanish *viejo*, *vejez*, *envejecer*; *alto*, *altura*, *subir*; *profundo*, *profundidad*, *descender*. Developments are a mere fact of category. So they can be considered as belonging to grammar, not to lexicology⁸².

There are two types of developments: *conversion* and *transposition*.

6.3.2.1. Conversion.

It is a development without generalization of meaning. For example, Spanish *bello*, *lo bello*; English *concrete*, the *concrete*. *Conversion* is occasional thus not involving lexicalization of the element developed.

6.3.2.2. *Transposition*

It is a development with semantic generalization. For example, English *friend*> *friendship*; *free*>*freedom*. *Transposition* is permanent. It can be combined with complementary grammatical determinations. For example, the Spanish *derrota* > *derrotar*. The first has no further determination, but the second one is to be determined in the object of its signification (*derrotar a alguien*). That is, the last one means the same but with the grammatical determination “passive”⁸³.

Transposition is a one sense-oriented development. You can see this in comparison of English and Spanish. In English you have *true* - *truth* and *false* - *falsity*, or *falsehood*. In Spanish, however you have *verdad*, *verdadero*, but *falso* *falsedad*. Hence the expressions, Spanish *es verdad* but *es falso*. That is, the development in the case of *verdad* starts with the noun in affirmative sentences but in the case of *falso* with the adjective in negative sentences.

⁸² Coseriu 1981: 139.

⁸³ Coseriu 1981: 138.

The set of successive degrees of transposition can be called a *transpositive series* and the set of elements in a relationship of transposition *transpositive order*⁸⁴.

6.3.3. *Derivation.*

It is the combination of two lexemes usually belonging to two different lexical fields one determining the other. The former, the determiner, is generally present in the meaning of the latter, the determined one. This can be stated in the formula {lexeme A= lexeme B + lexeme A}. Lexeme B can be a very general archilexeme such as agent or the archilexeme of a particular lexical field. Lexeme A in turn can be derivative. The result, that is, the word derived in this sense represents a fact of expression. For example, from *handle* > *handler* in *book-handler*. That is, *handle* = {handle + agent}; another example, *deal* > *dealer* in *car-dealer*. In a certain sense the study of derivation and composition belongs to syntagmatics⁸⁵.

6.4. Syntagmatic structures or solidarities.

Solidarities constitute the semantic determination of a word by means of a lexical class, an archilexeme or a lexeme insofar as that particular lexical class, archilexeme or lexeme functions as a distinctive feature in the structure of signification of the word in question. That is, a lexical class, an archilexeme or a lexeme belongs to the semantic definition of the word in question. The word in question is to be defined in terms of that lexical class, archilexeme or lexeme as a minimum semantic feature or difference. Syntagmatic structures do not deal with the relationship between two words. They have to do with the structure of a word and its defining component⁸⁶. For example, Spanish *añoso*. *Añoso* is defined by *tree* since *tree* is the only semantic object it can be applied of. That is, the contents of the word *tree* is implicit in *añoso* but the contents of *tree* is not depleted in the word *añoso*. In the same sense *bisoño*. *Bisoño* is determined by the contents of *soldado* since *soldado* is a determining feature in *bisoño*, but the contents of *soldado* is much larger than the contents of *bisoño*.

When the determination of a word is made with a classeme or an archilexeme the determination is made with all words represented in the lexical class determined by the classeme or the archilexeme⁸⁷. For example, the word *pregnant* is determined by the lexical class *feminine*. In this sense you can apply *pregnant* to *women*, *mares*, *she-goats* and all feminine animals. All feminine animal semantic objects determine the concept of *pregnant*. As with transposition solidarities are one-sense oriented structures. It is *bisoño* that is determined by *soldado* not *soldado* by *bisoño*. Similarly it is *feminine* that determines *pregnant* and not the other way round.

⁸⁴ Coseriu 1981: 139.

⁸⁵ Coseriu 1981: 140

⁸⁶ Coseriu 1981: 148.

⁸⁷ Coseriu 1981: 149.

There are three kinds of solidarities: *affinity*, *selection* and *implication*. The criterion to distinguish the different types of solidarities is the way the contents of the lexemes in a paradigm are determined with the units of another paradigm. The separation of the concept of the determined word or class and the determining word or class is fundamental⁸⁸.

6.4.1. Affinity.

It is the determination of the meaning of a word by the meaning of another so that the former acts as a feature in the latter. Examples, *soldado* and *bisoño*; *árbol* and *añoso*; *bird* and *callow*; *fruit* and *ripe*.

6.4.2. Selection.

It is the determination executed with the archilexeme of a word acting as a feature in another one. Example, *horse* is a member of the lexical field of *travelling* in so far as *ride* belongs to the *lexical field of travelling*. *Horse* is considered a feature in *ride*, the archilexeme *travelling* thus acts as a feature in *horse*. The same relationship of selection is to be found in *ship* and *voyage*, *wing* and *fly*. At the same time travel appears as a defining feature in, respectively, *ride*, *voyage* and *fly*.

6.4.3. Implication.

It is the relationship of determination performed by the entire meaning of a lexeme, playing the function of a feature in the second lexeme. Example, *young* and *juvenile*; *young* and *teenage*; *young* and *childish* or *girlish*; and *childish* and *girlish*.

⁸⁸ Coseriu 1981: 151.

Appendix I: Analysis of the lexical field of adjectives of ‘courage and fear’

The analysis of *adjectives of courage and fear* is based on the information given in the *Collins Cobuild English Language Dictionary 1989 (CCELD)*⁸⁹, the *Longman Lexicon of Contemporary English*, and the *Longman Dictionary of Contemporary English*. The information is extracted in accordance with the following criteria: the classeme (SAID OF), the definition of the meaning of the adjective (DN), the syntactic combination of the adjective: attributive (ATTR.), predicative (PRED.); the status of the adjective as to intensification: intensifying (INTENSIF.) or non-intensifying (NON-INTENSIF.); the level of speech (LS); the synonym (SN) or antinomy (AN); the extensions of meaning (EX); and the syntactic restrictions the adjective may have (ST). After this segmentation of the information given in the referred to lexicographical works the lexematic analysis is made. All adjectives analysed are followed with examples in order to illustrate the analysis made. The examples, sometimes reduced or adapted, were taken from the bibliographical works said above, especially from the *Collins Cobuild English Language Dictionary*. This analysis was made out of a selection of 2108 adjectives (5101 senses in total) of the English language. All adjectives were analysed following the principles of lexematics. One of the lexical fields analysed is presented here as an illustration.

Adjectives having the feature [BEHAVING DECIDEDLY]/[BEHAVING NON-DECIDEDLY] are the following:

Adjectives Predicating of [+HUMAN]

afraid¹

SAID OF: persons

DN: feeling fear as they think something or someone will hurt them; feeling that something horrible will happen to them

ST: ATTR. PRED. NON-INTENSIF.

ST: PREP. OF/TO-INF.

LEXEMATIC ANALYSIS: afraid¹={[+HUMAN]+[BEHAVING NON-DECIDEDLY]+[feeling fear]}.

EXAMPLES: She was afraid that I might be embarrassed. She was terribly afraid of offending anyone.

afraid²

SAID OF: persons

DN: worried about an unpleasant situation; wanting to avoid an unpleasant situation

ST: ATTR. PRED. NON-INTENSIF.

ST: REPORT CLAUSE/to-INF./PREP of

LEXEMATIC ANALYSIS: afraid²={[+HUMAN]+[BEHAVING NON-DECIDEDLY] +[feeling fear]+[worried]}.

EXAMPLES: *They were afraid of you -they knew you had killed many men. He was afraid even to turn his head.*

apprehensive¹

SAID OF: persons

⁸⁹ See information about this dictionary in § 1.1.3.

DN: worried or afraid about the future; feeling that something unpleasant may happen

ST: ATTR. PRED. INTENSIF.

ST: PREP. about

EX: someone's expression or behaviour

LEXEMATIC ANALYSIS: apprehensive¹={ [+HUMAN]+[BEHAVING NON-DECIDEDLY] +[feeling fear]+[worried about the future]}.

EXAMPLES: He was rather apprehensive of the consequences. I felt a bit apprehensive about the whole operation. ...apprehensive glances.

assertive¹

SAID OF: persons

DN: speaking and acting in a forceful way; not being paid any special attention by other people

ST: ATTR. PRED. INTENSIF.

AN: timid

LEXEMATIC ANALYSIS: assertive¹={ [+HUMAN]+[BEHAVING DECIDEDLY]+[in a forceful way]}.

EXAMPLES: Her son was an energetic, assertive boy, always ready to argue. Pointing directly to a listener is an assertive, authoritarian act.

audacious¹

SAID OF: human actions or behaviour

DN: taking risks in order to achieve something

LS: APPROVINGLY

ST: ATTR. PRED. INTENSIF.

AN: cowardly

EX: persons

LEXEMATIC ANALYSIS: audacious¹={ [+HUMAN: action]+[BEHAVING DECIDEDLY]+[taking risks]}.

EXAMPLES: ...a series of audacious ventures. You may be called upon to take audacious decisions. ...an audacious chef.

bloodcurdling¹

SAID OF: sounds or stories

DN: very frightening and horrible

ST: ATTR

LEXEMATIC ANALYSIS: bloodcurdling¹={ [+HUMAN: sounds or stories]+[BEHAVING NON-DECIDEDLY] +[feeling fear]+[frightened]}.

EXAMPLES: ...dancer who were making bloodcurdling noises.

bold¹

SAID OF: persons

DN: not afraid to do things which involve risk or danger

ST: ATTR. PRED. INTENSIF.

AN: cautious

EX: human actions or behaviour

LEXEMATIC ANALYSIS: bold¹={ [+HUMAN]+[BEHAVING DECIDEDLY]+[not afraid of taking risks]}.

EXAMPLES: ...the most ambitious, bold and imaginative of Europe's citizens. ...a bold move. ...bold conjectures.

bold²

SAID OF: persons

DN: not shy about looking at or talking to people; not showing enough respect

ST: ATTR. PRED. INTENSIF.

AN: shy, modest

EX: human actions or behaviour.

LEXEMATIC ANALYSIS: bold²={ [+HUMAN: action: speaking to another one]+[BEHAVING DECIDEDLY]+[with no respect to]}

Example: She had bold brown eyes.

bold³

SAID OF: lines or designs

DN: painted or drawn in a clear, strong and decisive way

ST: ATTR. PRED.

LEXEMATIC ANALYSIS: bold³={ [+HUMAN: action: line or design]+[BEHAVING DECIDEDLY]+[strong and decisive]}

EXAMPLES: ...bold loopy handwriting. She began to paint her lips with bold, defiant strokes.

bold⁴

SAID OF: colours, and patterns

DN: very bright or dark and very noticeable

ST: ATTR. PRED. INTENSIF.

LEXEMATIC ANALYSIS: bold⁴={ [+HUMAN: action: colour and pattern]+[BEHAVING DECIDEDLY]+[very clear, strong and decisive]}

EXAMPLES: ...a building of bold red brick. ...his bold black-and-white striped shirt.

bold⁵

SAID OF: printed letters

DN: thicker and looking darker than ordinary printed letters

ST: ATTR.

LEXEMATIC ANALYSIS: bold⁵={ [+HUMAN: action: printed letter]+[BEHAVING DECIDEDLY]+[thicker and darker]}

EXAMPLES: It is in bold type.

brave¹

SAID OF: persons

DN: with courage to do something even if it is frightening or dangerous

LS: APPROVINGLY

ST: ATTR. PRED. INTENSIF.

AN: cowardly

EX: human actions or behaviour

LEXEMATIC ANALYSIS: brave¹={ [+HUMAN]+[BEHAVING DECIDEDLY]+[courage]}

EXAMPLES: I think you were brave to defy convention. He made a brave attempt to prevent the hijack.

brave²

SAID OF: situations

DN: fine or glorious

LS: literary use

ST: ATTR

LEXEMATIC ANALYSIS: brave²={ [+HUMAN: situation]+[BEHAVING DECIDEDLY]+[fine and glorious]}

EXAMPLES: The whole brave American dream seemed to be crumbling around our ears. Brave new world.

brazen¹

SAID OF: persons

DN: very bold; not caring if other people think they are behaving wrongly

ST: ATTR. PRED. INTENSIF.

EX: things people say or do

LEXEMATIC ANALYSIS: brazen¹={ [+HUMAN]+[BEHAVING DECIDEDLY]+ [not caring about others' opinions]}

EXAMPLES: ...a brazen whore. ...a brazen accusation. I couldn't do anything so brazen as that.

courageous¹

SAID OF: persons

DN: showing courage

ST: ATTR. PRED. INTENSIF.

AN: cowardly, timorous

EX: human actions or behaviour

LEXEMATIC ANALYSIS: courageous¹={[+HUMAN]+[BEHAVING DECIDEDLY]+[showing courage]}

EXAMPLES: ...a brazen whore. ...a brazen accusation. I couldn't do anything so brazen as that.

cowardly¹

SAID OF: human actions or behaviour

DN: afraid, and avoiding doing something dangerous or unpleasant

ST: ATTR. PRED. INTENSIF.

AN: courageous

EX: persons and groups of persons

LEXEMATIC ANALYSIS: cowardly¹={[+HUMAN: action or behaviour]+[BEHAVING NON-DECIDEDLY]+[afraid]}

EXAMPLES: ...a cowardly and perverse refusal of reality. ...corrupt and cowardly generals.

daring¹

SAID OF: persons

DN: willing to do things that might be dangerous

ST: ATTR. PRED. INTENSIF.

AN: cautious

EX: human actions or behaviour

LEXEMATIC ANALYSIS: daring¹={[+HUMAN]+[BEHAVING DECIDEDLY]+[doing things liable to be dangerous]}

EXAMPLES: Be a bit more daring. ...a daring raid.

daring²

SAID OF: human actions

DN: willing to say new things that may shock other people; willing to do things that might anger other people

ST: ATTR. PRED. INTENSIF.

EX: human actions or behaviour

LEXEMATIC ANALYSIS: daring²={[+HUMAN: action: say]+[BEHAVING DECIDEDLY]+[doing things liable to shock other people]}

EXAMPLES: ... a daring observation.

fearful¹

SAID OF: persons

DN: afraid of something or afraid of doing something

ST: ATTR. PRED. INTENSIF.

ST: PREP. of

confident

LEXEMATIC ANALYSIS: fearful¹={[+HUMAN]+[BEHAVING NON-DECIDEDLY]+[feeling fear]+[afraid to behave]}

EXAMPLES: A fearful person is a weak person. ...parents who are fearful of letting their feelings take over.

fearful²

SAID OF: situations

DN: unpleasant or bad

ST: ATTR. PRED. INTENSIF.

LEXEMATIC ANALYSIS: fearful²={[+HUMAN: situation]+[BEHAVING NON-DECIDEDLY]+[feeling fear]+[unpleasant or bad]}

EXAMPLES: This led to all sorts of fearful consequences.

fearful³

SAID OF: human actions

DN: emphasizing that they are very bad

LS: INFORMAL SPEECH.

ST: ATTR.

LEXEMATIC ANALYSIS: fearful³={+[HUMAN: action]+[BEHAVING NON-DECIDEDLY+[feeling fear]+[emphasizing risks]]}

EXAMPLES: I've had a fearful row with my parents. They were making a fearful racket.

fearless¹

SAID OF: persons

DN: not afraid at all

ST: ATTR. PRED.

LEXEMATIC ANALYSIS: fearless³={+[HUMAN]+[BEHAVING DECIDEDLY]+[not afraid at all]}

EXAMPLES: ...fearless reporters.

frightened¹

SAID OF: persons

DN: afraid of something that has just happened or may happen

ST: ATTR. PRED. INTENSIF.

EX: human attributes.

LEXEMATIC ANALYSIS: frightened¹={+[HUMAN]+[BEHAVING NON-DECIDEDLY+[feeling fear]+[afraid of something happened]]}

EXAMPLES: The men led their frightened families to safety. They stared at him with frightened eyes.

frightened²

SAID OF: persons

DN: nervous or anxious about something

ST: ATTR. PRED. NON-INTENSIF.

LEXEMATIC ANALYSIS: frightened²={+[HUMAN]+[BEHAVING NON-DECIDEDLY+[feeling fear]+[nervous or anxious]]}

EXAMPLES: I was frightened of making a fool of myself. I'm frightened to look. They were frightened there would be another earthquake.

gallant¹

SAID OF: persons

DN: very brave or honourable when in danger or great difficulty

ST: ATTR. PRED. INTENSIF.

EX: human actions or behaviour

LEXEMATIC ANALYSIS: gallant¹={+[HUMAN]+[BEHAVING DECIDEDLY]+[very brave when in danger]}

EXAMPLES: They are one of the most distinguished and gallant people in Europe. They have put up a gallant fight for pensioners over the years.

gallant²

SAID OF: persons

DN: kind, polite and considerate towards other people

ST: ATTR. PRED. INTENSIF.

EX: human actions or behaviour

LEXEMATIC ANALYSIS: gallant²={+[HUMAN]+[BEHAVING DECIDEDLY]+[kindly, politely and considerately]}

EXAMPLES: 'Allow me', said the gallant policeman. ...a gallant bow.

heroic¹

SAID OF: human actions or behaviour

DN: brave and courageous

ST: ATTR. PRED. INTENSIF.

EX: persons

LEXEMATIC ANALYSIS: heroic¹={+[HUMAN: action or behaviour]+[BEHAVING DECIDEDLY]+[very brave and dangerously]}

EXAMPLES: ...truly heroic work by army engineers. She, in death, became more heroic.

heroic²

SAID OF: human actions or behaviour

DN: involving determination to succeed and deserving admiration

ST: ATTR. PRED. INTENSIF.

LEXEMATIC ANALYSIS: heroic²={+[HUMAN: action or behaviour]+[BEHAVING DECIDEDLY]+[involving determination]+[deserving admiration]}

EXAMPLES: ...in spite of heroic and efficient work by German police... ...a heroic stand against undemocratic provocation.

heroic³

SAID OF: stories, characters

DN: involving a hero or relating to a hero's characteristics

ST: ATTR.

LEXEMATIC ANALYSIS: heroic³={+[HUMAN: stories or character]+[BEHAVING DECIDEDLY]+[involving determination]+[deserving admiration]+[relating to a hero's characteristics]}

EXAMPLES: They are heroic figures in the fighting against cancer. Sports people take on a heroic dimension.

high-spirited¹

SAID OF: persons

DN: very lively and always wanting to have fun and adventure

ST: ATTR. PRED. INTENSIF.

LEXEMATIC ANALYSIS: high-spirited¹={+[HUMAN]+[BEHAVING DECIDEDLY]+[very lively]+[wanting fun and adventure]}

EXAMPLES:

intrepid¹

SAID OF: persons

DN: acting in a brave way; old-fashioned

ST: ATTR. PRED. INTENSIF.

LEXEMATIC ANALYSIS: high-spirited²={+[HUMAN]+[BEHAVING DECIDEDLY]+[bravely]}

EXAMPLES: Some intrepid individuals were still prepared to make the journey. Wasn't I on the route of those intrepid explorers, Lewis I and Clark?

low-spirited¹

SAID OF: persons

DN: depressed

ST: ATTR. PRED. INTENSIF.

LEXEMATIC ANALYSIS: low-spirited¹={+[HUMAN]+[BEHAVING NON-DECIDEDLY]+[depressed]}

panicky¹

SAID OF: feelings or behaviour

DN: in an extreme situation so that people cannot react properly

ST: ATTR. PRED. INTENSIF.

LEXEMATIC ANALYSIS: panicky¹={+[HUMAN: feeling or behaviour]+[BEHAVING NON-DECIDEDLY]+[feeling fear]+[not able to react]}

EXAMPLES: ...a panicky feeling that lasts for a moment before each exam. ...a panicky reaction.

public-spirited¹

SAID OF: persons

DN: trying to help the community that they belong to

LS: APPROVINGLY

ST: ATTR. PRED. INTENSIF.

AN: selfish

LEXEMATIC ANALYSIS: public-spirited¹={+[HUMAN]+[BEHAVING DECIDEDLY]+[trying to help the community they belong to]}

EXAMPLES: She's a public-spirited woman who takes part in politics.

scared¹

SAID OF: persons

DN: very frightened of someone or something; unable to behave calmly

ST: ATTR. PRED. NON-INTENSIF.

ST: PREP. of/to-INF.

LEXEMATIC ANALYSIS: scared¹={+[HUMAN]+[BEHAVING NON-DECIDEDLY]+[feeling fear]+[unable to behave calmly]}

EXAMPLES: He was terribly scared. ...too shocked and scared to move.

scared²

SAID OF: persons

DN: very worried and nervous about something unpleasant likely to happen

ST: ATTR. PRED. NON-INTENSIF.

SR: REPORT CLAUSE/PREP of+VERB-ing

LEXEMATIC ANALYSIS: scared²={+[HUMAN]+[BEHAVING NON-DECIDEDLY]+[feeling fear]+[unable to behave calmly]+[worried about something unpleasant likely to happen]}

EXAMPLES: I'm scared that these will turn out to be the wrong ones. They are scared of making a fool of themselves.

shy¹

SAID OF: persons

DN: nervous and uncomfortable in the company of other people; uncomfortable in the company of people they do not know

ST: ATTR. PRED. INTENSIF.

EX: human actions or behaviour

LEXEMATIC ANALYSIS: shy¹={+[HUMAN]+[BEHAVING NON-DECIDEDLY]+[feeling fear]+[nervous and uncomfortable in the company of others]}

EXAMPLES: I've always been a bit shy. He was too shy to talk to anyone at the party. ...a shy reaction.

shy²

SAID OF: persons

DN: unwilling to do something; afraid of what might happen

ST: ATTR. PRED. NON-INTENSIF.

ST: PREP. of

LEXEMATIC ANALYSIS: shy²={+[HUMAN]+[BEHAVING NON-DECIDEDLY]+[feeling fear]+[nervous and uncomfortable in the company of others]+[unwilling to do something]}

EXAMPLES: Don't be shy of telling them what you think.

shy³

SAID OF: animals

DN: avoiding human beings and easily frightened by them

ST: ATTR. PRED. INTENSIF.

LEXEMATIC ANALYSIS: shy³={+[ANIMAL]+[BEHAVING NON-DECIDEDLY+[feeling fear]+[nervous and uncomfortable in the company of others]+[avoiding human beings]+[frightened by them]}

EXAMPLES: The brook was muddy and the trout were shy. They are shy birds that normally live unobtrusive lives.

spirited¹

SAID OF: human actions or behaviour

DN: showing great energy and determination

LS: APPROVINGLY

ST: ATTR. PRED. INTENSIF.

LEXEMATIC ANALYSIS: spirited¹={+[HUMAN]+[BEHAVING DECIDEDLY+[feeling fear]+[showing great energy and determination]}

EXAMPLES: Despite spirited resistance by Republican forces, the town fell to the Nationalists. She put up a spirited defence of her government's policies.

terrified¹

SAID OF: persons

DN: feeling extremely frightened

ST: ATTR. PRED. INTENSIF.

LEXEMATIC ANALYSIS: terrified¹={+[HUMAN]+[BEHAVING NON-DECIDEDLY+[feeling fear]+[extremely frightened]}

EXAMPLES: My sister was too terrified to cry.

timid¹

SAID OF: persons

DN: shy and showing no courage or self-confidence

ST: ATTR. PRED. INTENSIF.

EX: human actions or behaviour

LEXEMATIC ANALYSIS: timid¹={+[HUMAN]+[BEHAVING NON-DECIDEDLY+[feeling fear]+[showing no courage or self-confidence]}

EXAMPLES: He was a tall, plump, very timid tall man. ...a timid young girl. ...a timid smile.

timorous¹

SAID OF: persons

DN: frightened and nervous of other people, situations, etc.

LS: LITERARY USE.

ST: ATTR. PRED. INTENSIF.

LEXEMATIC ANALYSIS: timorous¹={+[HUMAN]+[BEHAVING NON-DECIDEDLY+[feeling fear]+[frightened and nervous of other people]}

EXAMPLES: The new occupants were too timorous to complain the landlord about the high rent.

valiant¹

SAID OF: human actions or behaviour

DN: brave, especially when the situation is dangerous or difficult

ST: ATTR. PRED. INTENSIF.

EX: persons or groups

LEXEMATIC ANALYSIS: valiant¹={+[HUMAN: actions or behaviour]+[BEHAVING DECIDEDLY]+[in difficult situations]}

EXAMPLES: He made a valiant attempt to rescue the struggling victim. ...a small valiant community.

Adjectives Predicating of [-CONC: situations].

alarming¹

SAID OF: situations

DN: causing people to be worried or concerned

ST: ATTR. PRED. INTENSIF.

LEXEMATIC ANALYSIS: alarming¹={[-CONCRETE: situations: +HUMAN]+[BEHAVING NON-DECIDEDLY+[feeling fear]+[causing people to be worried or concerned]]}

EXAMPLES: The world's forests are shrinking at an alarming rate. ...an alarming increase in racial hostility.

frightening¹

SAID OF: situations

DN: making people feel afraid, anxious, or nervous

ST: ATTR. PRED. INTENSIF.

LEXEMATIC ANALYSIS: frightening¹={[-CONCRETE: situations: +HUMAN]+[BEHAVING NON-DECIDEDLY+[feeling fear]+[causing people to feel afraid, anxious, or nervous]]}

EXAMPLES: ...the most frightening sight he had ever seen. It is frightening to think what damage it would do.

scary¹

SAID OF: situations

DN: making people feel a little bit frightened

LS: INFORMAL SPEECH.

ST: ATTR. PRED. INTENSIF.

LEXEMATIC ANALYSIS: scary¹={[-CONCRETE: situations: +HUMAN]+[BEHAVING NON-DECIDEDLY: causing people to be feel a little bit frightened]]}

EXAMPLES: 'Is it fun?' -'Not at first. It's scary. It was a scary moment.

terrifying¹

SAID OF: situations

DN: making people very frightened

ST: ATTR. PRED. INTENSIF.

LEXEMATIC ANALYSIS: terrifying¹={[-CONCRETE: situations: +HUMAN]+[BEHAVING NON-DECIDEDLY+[feeling fear]+[causing people to be very frightened]]}

EXAMPLES: The most terrifying aspect of nuclear bombing is radiation. ...a terrifying nightmare.

In a word: the structure of signification of the adjectival lexical field of *courage and fear* is made up of a classeme, a specific feature and the determination of both the specific feature and sometimes of the classeme. The classeme manifests the syntagmatic relationships of the lexeme in question. The classemes go beyond the signification of the lexemes and the lexical field since they appear as independent words in the language. The classemes in the lexemes of this lexical field have to do with human subjects and the objects affecting human subjects since these ones describe states of affairs affecting human subjects either subjectively and objectively. This double relationship of signification affects the specific semes, the value in common defining the lexical field. This one is to be defined in

Jesús Martínez del Castillo. *Semantics and Lexicology*.

terms of the statement of the particular state of affairs [BEHAVE DECIDEDLY] and the contrary, [BEHAVE NON-DECIDEDLY].

Appendix II: Representation of the lexical field of ‘courage and fear’

Lexemes	Paradigmatic relationships of opposition: [DECIDEDLY]	Syntagmatic relationships	
		[+HUMAN]	[ABSTRACT: situation]
Audacious	+	+	
Bold	+	+	
Brave	+	+	
Brazen	+	+	
Courageous	+	+	
Daring	+	+	
Fearless	+	+	
Gallant	+	+	
Heroic	+	+	
High-spirited	+	+	
Intrepid	+	+	
Public-spirited	+	+	
Spirited	+	+	
Valiant	+	+	
Afraid	-	+	
Apprehensive	-	+	
Cowardly	-	+	
Fearful	-	+	
Frightened	-	+	
Low-spirited	-	+	
Pacniky	-	+	
Scared	-	+	
Shy	-	+	
Terrified	-	+	
Timid	-	+	
Timorous	-	+	
Assertive	+		
Frightening	-		+
Scary	-		+
Terrifying	-		+

That is, a lexical field is a group of lexemes—adjectival lexemes in this case—with a common lexical value, [BEHAVE DECIDEDLY] and the contrary, [BEHAVE NON-DECIDEDLY]. That is, the lexical value can or cannot be given ontologically, thus reflecting the way of thinking of Westerners. Either if it is given or not [BEHAVE DECIDEDLY] is the determining feature. That is, *brave* and *cowardly*, the archilexemes structuring the other lexemes in the lexical field thus dividing it into two areas of signification, are different from each other since the former performs the value of the lexical field and the latter denies it but both have the same semantic structure. Between the affirmation and the negation of the value of the lexical field there can be some possibilities of being expressed with the

other lexemes in the lexical field. But these possibilities can or cannot exist historically in the language.

Appendix III: The structure of the signification of adjectives.

In order to illustrate the value of the lexical field or *adjectives of courage and fear* and bearing in mind the total set of adjectives analysed (2108 with 5101 senses), once the adjectives were assigned to different particular lexical fields, I am adding here the structure of lexical fields of adjectives in the following classification. This classification was made by me in different steps. First I tried this classification in my book, *An Open Dimension of Meaning: a Semantic Study of Adjectives*, Servicio de Publicaciones de la Universidad de Almería, 1997. Then in 1999 I came back on the topic again in my book, *La intelección, el significado, los adjetivos*, Servicio de Publicaciones de la Universidad de Almería, when I changed the original classification a bit. And then in my book, *Significado y conocimiento: la estructura de significación de los adjetivos subjetivos*, Granada: Granada Lingvistica, 2002, when I applied the principles of a theory of knowledge to my classification (see appendix IV). With this classification we can see the connection of the different the lexical fields with one another.

Hierarchy of lexical fields of adjectives: concrete signification

state: concrete: age
state: concrete: age: proper
state: concrete: age: proper: advanced
state: concrete: age: proper: full
state: concrete: age: proper: short
state: concrete: age: retrospective: advanced
state: concrete: age: retrospective: short
state: concrete: location
state: concrete: movement
state: concrete: movement: direction
state: concrete: nature
state: concrete: nature: physics
state: concrete: position
state: concrete: weather
state: concrete: living
state: concrete: living: animal
state: concrete: living: animal: sex
state: concrete: living: animal: sex: attraction
state: concrete: living: animal: sex: reproduction
state: concrete: living: human
state: concrete: living: human: capability
state: concrete: living: human: clothing
state: concrete: living: human: company
state: concrete: living: human: health
state: concrete: living: human: health: care

state: concrete: living: human: intelligence
state: concrete: living: human: intelligence: knowledge
state: concrete: living: human: interest
state: concrete: living: human: psyche
state: concrete: living: human: use
state: concrete: living: human: behaviour
state: concrete: living: human: behaviour: activity
state: concrete: living: human: behaviour: action: occupation
state: concrete: living: human: behaviour: courage & fear
state: concrete: living: human: behaviour: kindness
state: concrete: living: human: behaviour: largesse
state: concrete: living: human: behaviour: manners
state: concrete: living: human: behaviour: reason
state: concrete: living: human: feeling
state: concrete: living: human: feeling: anger
state: concrete: living: human: feeling: compassion
state: concrete: living: human: feeling: consciousness
state: concrete: living: human: feeling: emotion
state: concrete: living: human: feeling: happiness
state: concrete: living: human: feeling: hunger & thirst
state: concrete: living: human: perception
state: concrete: living: human: perception: hearing
state: concrete: living: human: perception: sight
state: concrete: living: human: perception: smell
state: concrete: living: human: perception: taste
state: concrete: living: human: perception: touch
state: concrete: living: human: perception: touch: humidity
state: concrete: living: human: perception: touch: solidity
state: concrete: living: human: perception: touch: solidity: fire
state: concrete: living: human: perception: touch: temperature
state: concrete: material
state: concrete: material: artefact
state: concrete: material: colour
state: concrete: material: dimension
state: concrete: material: dimension: depth
state: concrete: material: dimension: height
state: concrete: material: dimension: length
state: concrete: material: dimension: quantity
state: concrete: material: dimension: shape
state: concrete: material: dimension: shape: surface
state: concrete: material: dimension: size
state: concrete: material: dimension: strength

state: concrete: material: dimension: weight

state: concrete: material: dimension: width

Hierarchy of lexical fields of adjectives: abstract signification

state: abstract: intellection

state: abstract: intellection: composition

state: abstract: intellection: comprehension

state: abstract: intellection: correction

state: abstract: intellection: distinction

state: abstract: intellection: expression

state: abstract: intellection: reasoning

state: abstract: intellection: relationship

state: abstract: occurrence

state: abstract: occurrence: event: chance

state: abstract: occurrence: event: danger

state: abstract: occurrence: event: duration: proper

state: abstract: occurrence: event: duration: retrospective

state: abstract: occurrence: event: factuality

state: abstract: occurrence: event: factuality: amusement

state: abstract: occurrence: event: factuality: truth

state: abstract: occurrence: event: opportunity

state: abstract: occurrence: situation

state: abstract: society

state: abstract: society: defence

state: abstract: society: economy

state: abstract: society: education

state: abstract: society: education: arts

state: abstract: society: education: science

state: abstract: society: family

state: abstract: society: law

state: abstract: society: law: obligation

state: abstract: society: politics

state: abstract: society: popularity

state: abstract: society: property

state: abstract: society: provenance

state: abstract: society: religion

state: abstract: evaluation

state: abstract: evaluation: beauty

state: abstract: evaluation: cleanliness

state: abstract: evaluation: ease

state: abstract: evaluation: importance

state: abstract: evaluation: intensity

state: abstract: evaluation: quality

The classification reveals the mode of thinking of the speakers of a particular language. They all start with the feature [STATE], a feature, the history of which reveals the way of thinking of Westerners. This feature reveals the way of conceiving things in the Western Civilization, first formulated by Old Greek thinkers Parmenides of Elea, Heraclitus of Ephesus and Aristotle. This problem was studied by me in *Modes of Thinking, Language and Linguistics* (2013) and several articles. This way of thinking, however, was introduced in the English Language little by little in the Middle Ages (cf. my article, *Modes of thinking and language change. The loss of inflexions in Old English*).

Since the feature [STATE] appears in all adjectives (and words of the language) it is not distinctive within the language. But it is in consideration to other languages, that is, it represents a typological feature in the language.

Appendix IV: Adjectives as the result of an act of knowing.

Since speaking is speaking, saying and knowing, all adjectives (and the very existence of words in a particular language) are the result of (series of) acts of knowing. An act of knowing has two basic and essential components, the subject who knows and the thing known. Because of this all words of a particular language reflect the act of knowing having produced them. Some reflect the subject knowing and some reflect the thing known. So adjectives are to be divided into two groups, subjective adjectives and objective adjectives. This analysis was made by me in *Significado y conocimiento: la significación de los adjetivos subjetivos* 2002.

1.1. Subjective abstract signification

Cognitive subject/ Objet Known	Type of Signification	Previous Signification	Léxical Field
Subject	Abstract		Intellect
Subject	Abstract	Intellection	Composition
Subject	Abstract	Intellection	Comprehension
Subject	Abstract	Intellection	Correction
Subject	Abstract	Intellection	Distinction
Subject	Abstract	Intellection	Expression
Subject	Abstract	Intellection	Reasoning
Subject	Abstract	Intellection	Relationship
Subject	Abstract	Occurrence: Event	Duration
Subject	Abstract	Occurrence: Event	Situation
Subject	Abstract	Occurrence: Event	Factuality
Subject	Abstract	Occurrence: Event: Factuality	Amusement
Subject	Abstract	Occurrence: Event: Factuality	Chance
Subject	Abstract	Occurrence: Event: Factuality	Danger
Subject	Abstract	Occurrence: Event: Factuality	Opportunity
Subject	Abstract	Occurrence: Event: Factuality	Truth
Subject	Abstract	Valuation	Beauty
Subject	Abstract	Valuation	Clean
Subject	Abstract	Valuation	Ease
Subject	Abstract	Valuation	Importance
Subject	Abstract	Valuation	Intensity
Subject	Abstract	Valuation	Quality

1.2. Subjective concrete signification

Cognitive Subject/ Objet Known	Type of Signification	Previous Signification	Lexical Field
Subject	Concrete		Age
Subject	Concrete		Location
Subject	Concrete		Movement

Subject	Concrete	Movement	Direction
Subject	Concrete		Position
Subject	Concrete		Weather

2.1. Objective abstract signification

Cognitive Subject/ Object Known	Type of Signification	Previous Signification	Lexical Field
Object			Abstract
Object	Abstract		Society
Object	Abstract	Society	Defence
Object	Abstract	Society	Economy
Object	Abstract	Society	Education
Object	Abstract	Society: education	Arts
Object	Abstract	Society: education	Science
Object	Abstract	Society	Family
Object	Abstract	Society	Law
Object	Abstract	Society: law	Obligation
Object	Abstract	Society: law	Politics
Object	Abstract	Society: law	Popularity
Object	Abstract	Society	Property
Object	Abstract	Society	Provenance
Object	Abstract	Society	Religion

2.2. Objective concrete signification relating to [+LIVING: +HUMAN].

Cognitive Subject/ Object Known	Type of Signification	Previous Signification	Lexical Field
Object	Concrete		Animal
Object	Concrete	Animal	Sex
Object	Concrete	Animal: Sex	Attraction
Object	Concrete	Animal: Sex	Reproduction
Object	Concrete	Human	Behaviour
Object	Concrete	Human: Behaviour	Activity
Object	Concrete	Human: Behaviour: Activity	Occupation
Object	Concrete	Human: Behaviour	Courage-Fear
Object	Concrete	Human: Behaviour	Kindness
Object	Concrete	Human: Behaviour	Largesse
Object	Concrete	Human: Behaviour	Manners
Object	Concrete	Human: Behaviour	Reason
Object	Concrete	Human	Capability
Object	Concrete	Human	Clothing
Object	Concrete	Human	Company
Object	Concrete	Human: Feeling	Anger
Object	Concrete	Human: Feeling	Compassion
Object	Concrete	Human: Feeling	Consciousness

Object	Concrete	Human: Feeling	Emotion
Object	Concrete	Human: Feeling	Happiness
Object	Concrete	Human: Feeling	Hunger-Thirst
Object	Concrete	Human	Health
Object	Concrete	Human: Health	Care
Object	Concrete	Human	Intelligence
Object	Concrete	Human: Intelligence	Knowledge
Object	Concrete	Human	Interest
Object	Concrete	Human	Perception
Object	Concrete	Human: Perception	Hearing
Object	Concrete	Human: Perception	Sight
Object	Concrete	Human: Perception	Smell
Object	Concrete	Human: Perception	Taste
Object	Concrete	Human: Perception	Touch
Object	Concrete	Human: Perception: Touch	Humidity
Object	Concrete	Human: Perception: Touch	Solidity
Object	Concrete	Human: Perception: Touch: Solidity	Fire
Object	Concrete	Human: Perception: Touch:	Temperature
Object	Concrete	Human	Psyche
Object	Concrete	Human	Use
Object	Concrete		Living

2.3. Objective concrete signification relating to [MATERIAL].

Cognitive Subject/ Object Known	Type of Signification	Previous Signification	Lexical Field
Object			Concrete
Object	Concrete		Nature
Object	Concrete	Nature	Physics
Object	Concrete		Material
Object	Concrete	Material	Artifact
Object	Concrete	Material	Colour
Object	Concrete	Material	Dimension
Object	Concrete	Material: Dimension	Depth
Object	Concrete	Material: Dimension	Height
Object	Concrete	Material: Dimension	Length
Object	Concrete	Material: Dimension	Quantity
Object	Concrete	Material: Dimension	Shape
Object	Concrete	Material: Dimension: Shape	Surface
Object	Concrete	Material: Dimension	Size
Object	Concrete	Material: Dimension	Strength
Object	Concrete	Material: Dimension	Weight
Object	Concrete	Material: Dimension	Width

Summing up, a lexical field is the product of the historical apprehension of being in a particular language. Human subjects speak because they have something to say, they say because they are able to know. In this sense language is nothing but innumerable series of speech acts dealing with the performance of the meaningful intentional purpose of speakers. A language is nothing but a historical object made by speakers based on abstraction in their interiors, that is, in their conscience. In this sense a language represents the speech acts adopted by speakers thus made common in a particular speech community. In a theory of knowledge there are two unique dimensions, the knowing subject and the thing known. And these two dimensions can be found in the study of meaning of a particular language.

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