

# THE LEXICON

## INTRODUCTION

In this chapter we briefly treat the lexicon of English. The lexicon has been characterized as a mental inventory of words and productive word derivational processes. We take a considerably broader view of the lexicon; we consider it to comprise not only single words but also word compounds and conventionalized multiword phrases. Despite increasing its breadth, our treatment of the lexicon must be cursory, although some grammarians might even be surprised to find this topic included in a grammar book at all. Traditionally, grammar and lexicon were seen to be two distinct components of language, and indeed they still are treated as such in some grammatical theories. From a pedagogical perspective as well, vocabulary and grammar have usually been viewed as two different areas of language. We believe, however, that it is better to conceive of grammar and lexicon as opposite poles of one continuum, and for this reason, following Halliday (1994), we prefer to think in terms of *lexicogrammar*.

There are three reasons for our preference. First is the interlingual argument: that which is accomplished grammatically in one language can be realized lexically in another. For example, Warao, a language from Venezuela, attaches a grammatical inflection to a verb that corresponds to the modal verb *can*, a separate lexical item in English (Dixon 1991). Second, from an intralingual perspective, in keeping with our broader scope of the lexicon, we note that many multiword lexical units conform to the grammar of a language; that is, they adhere to acceptable word order. For example, in English the lexical order is always *by the way*, not *way by the*. Recent work in computer analyses of large corpora of English texts suggests that these patterned multiword phrases are basic intermediate units between lexis (words) and grammar (Nattinger and DeCarrico 1992). Third, when we focus on the extremes at the ends of the continuum, the dichotomy between grammar and lexicon seems to hold. For instance, at the grammatical end of the continuum we could place the function words, such as the preposition *of* and the verb *be*. At the other end we could assign content words, such as *garden* and *grow*. If we leave it at this, the distinction seems sensible. However, we soon see that the differences are really matters of degree, and intermediate examples are easy to find. For example, a preposition such as *in* would seem to have more semantic content than a content word such as *thing*. Content words vary enormously in their concreteness of meaning and in their semantic specificity (Langacker 1987). Furthermore, it is our position, articulated in the first chapter of this text, that grammatical units express meaning, as well as having form and use. This is no less true of lexicogrammatical units, as we shall show.

We treat lexical units at three levels: (1) that of the individual word and its components, (2) that of word compounds and co-occurrences, and (3) that of conventionalized multiword phrases. It is not our intent here to teach ESL/EFL teachers how to teach vocabulary. Many excellent books do so, and we include a number of them in our suggested references at the conclusion of this chapter. Nonetheless, it is important that teachers know what a lexicon would consist of in the model of English grammar we are

sketching. As we illustrate in our text, most lexical items appear in the basic structure of a sentence before the application of any rules. This reflects the fact that certain grammatical constructions are compatible with certain words and that a given word must often be used in special grammatical constructions. There are a few exceptions to this generalization about words appearing in the base, such as the addition of *do* in negative sentences and in questions where no auxiliary verb is present and one is needed. These exceptions are discussed at the appropriate time in the course of this book.

### WHAT DOES IT MEAN TO KNOW A WORD?

A question we might reasonably pose to help us understand what is entailed in the lexicon is this: What does it mean to know a word? We might answer as follows. To really know a word, one needs to know its

- spelling (orthography)
- phonetic representation (pronunciation, syllabification, and stress [if multisyllabic])
- morphological irregularity (where applicable)
- syntactic features and restrictions (including part of speech)
- common derivations and collocations (i.e., words with which it co-occurs)
- semantic features and restrictions
- pragmatic features and restrictions

Consider, for example, the form of the word *child*. The knowledge of an English speaker would include its spelling, c-h-i-l-d, and its pronunciation, /čayld/. With respect to morphological irregularity, the speaker would need to know that the noun *child* has an irregular and idiosyncratic plural, *children*, which is not generated by the regular rules for forming plurals in English.<sup>1</sup> Syntactic features and restrictions would include the word's part of speech—a noun—and in particular, the fact that *child* is a common countable noun. Common derivatives include *childlike*, *childish*, and *childhood*, while common collocations include *child's play*, *child labor*, and *child psychology*.

Semantic information would include the concept *human* and also information indicating that the word is neutral regarding gender distinction. It would contrast the term *child* with similar terms for younger humans, such as *infant* and *baby*, and it would also contrast the word with parallel items denoting older humans, such as *adolescent* or *adult*.

Finally, from a pragmatic or use perspective, the speaker would be able to contrast *child* with other words with the same meaning—for example, an informal counterpart, *kid*. Notice that there is a pragmatic restriction on this form, however. While many speakers of English are quite comfortable using the plural version of this informal form, *kids*, they find that its singular form has a certain pejorative connotation:

It's a snow day today. My kids are home from school. (acceptable)

It's a snow day today. ?My kid is home from school. (questionable)

Many native speakers of English would prefer to use *son* or *daughter* or some other word when referring to one child.

Speakers of English use this lexical information in various ways. For example, we use orthographic information when we alphabetize words, phonological information when we make words alliterate or rhyme, and syntactic information when we match determiners and nouns appropriately. Here are some examples of the latter:

- |                |                      |
|----------------|----------------------|
| this child     | (not *these child)   |
| these children | (not *this children) |
| many children  | (not *much children) |

Semantic information is used when we accept a lexical item in certain combinations as meaningful:

The child slept for two hours.

But we reject it in others as nonsensical—at least in any literal sense:

\*The child evaporated two hours ago.

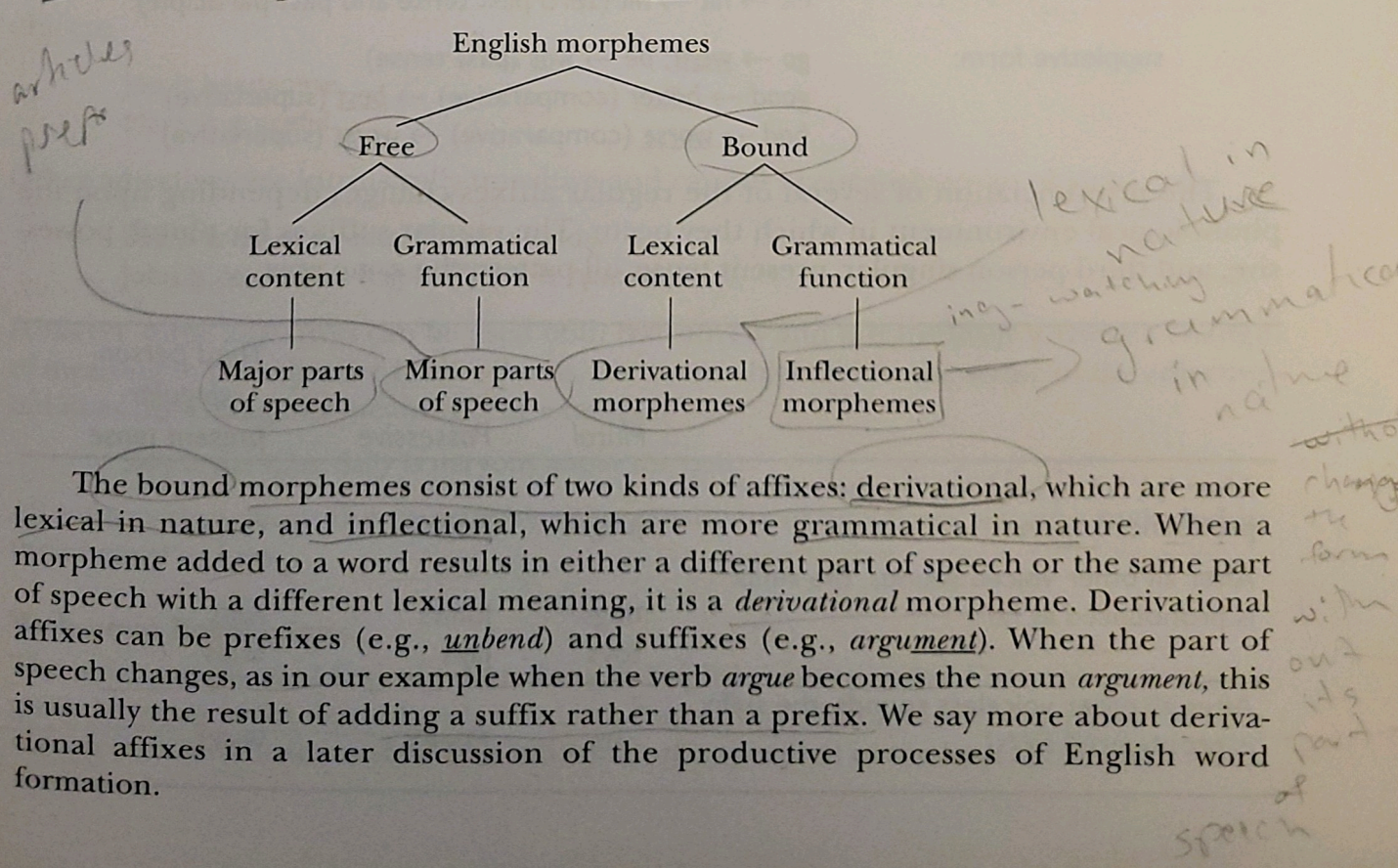
Semantic information also helps to distinguish among words with similar, but not identical, meanings. To truly know a word means to know both how it differs from and how it is similar to others. Pragmatic information is useful when we try to be sensitive to the appropriateness of the register of our lexical choices. It also helps us in the realm of usage—to identify patterns of words that collocate, or go together.

In order to truly know how to use a word appropriately in English, then, a speaker or writer would need to know much more than simply the general “meaning” of the word. We spend the next few sections looking at some of these attributes of words in more detail.

## THE FORM OF WORDS

### MORPHOLOGICAL AFFIXATION

Morphemes can be divided into two basic categories: freestanding words and morphemes that are bound or attached or affixed to other words. Each of these two major categories can be subdivided further into two types: those morphemes that have more lexical content and those that are more grammatical in function, although as we already submitted, the line between the two is sometimes hard to draw. The free morphemes with lexical content represent the major parts of speech: nouns, verbs, adjectives, and adverbs. The free grammatical functional morphemes include the minor parts of speech: articles, prepositions, and conjunctions, among others.



The bound morphemes consist of two kinds of affixes: derivational, which are more lexical in nature, and inflectional, which are more grammatical in nature. When a morpheme added to a word results in either a different part of speech or the same part of speech with a different lexical meaning, it is a *derivational* morpheme. Derivational affixes can be prefixes (e.g., *unbend*) and suffixes (e.g., *argument*). When the part of speech changes, as in our example when the verb *argue* becomes the noun *argument*, this is usually the result of adding a suffix rather than a prefix. We say more about derivational affixes in a later discussion of the productive processes of English word formation.

If a morpheme simply adds some element of meaning required by the grammar and changes the form of a word without changing its basic part of speech, then it is called an inflectional morpheme. An example of an inflectional ending would be the addition of -ing to the verb *watch* in *I am watching television*. *Watch* remains a verb after the *-ing* has been affixed, but the suffix adds a grammatical meaning, namely that the action is an ongoing one.

As you saw in the previous chapter, there are eight inflectional affixes in English:

Four of them involve verbs:

- present participle (*watching*)
- present tense—third person singular (*walks*)
- past tense (*jumped*)
- past participle (*eaten*).

Two are added to nouns:

- possessive (*John's*)
- plural (*books*)

And two of them come at the end of adjectives and adverbs:

- comparative (*clearer; faster*)
- superlative (*clearest; fastest*)

As you see, they are all suffixes. The only inflectional affixes that are not suffixes involve the irregular forms (plurals, past tenses, past participles, comparatives, superlatives), which can have internal vowel changes, no changes at all, or some completely different and historically unrelated (i.e., suppletive) form. For example:

- internal vowel change: *mouse* → *mice* (plural)  
*ring* → *rang* (past tense) → *rung* (past participle)
- no change: *one deer* → *several deer* (zero plural)  
*hit* → *hit* → *hit* (zero past tense and past participle)
- suppletive form: *go* → *went*; *be* → *was* (past tense)  
*good* → *better* (comparative) → *best* (superlative)  
*bad* → *worse* (comparative) → *worst* (superlative)

The pronunciation of several of the regular affixes changes depending upon the phonological environment in which they occur. The regular suffixes for plural, possessive, and third person singular, present tense, all pattern the same way:

	Plural	Possessive	Third person singular present tense
After /s/, /z/, /ʃ/, /ʒ/, /č/, /ǰ/, the suffix is pronounced as /əz/	judges	Rose's	rushes
After all other voiced sounds, the suffix is pronounced as /z/	dogs toys	John's Jay's	runs cries
After all other voiceless sounds, the suffix is pronounced as /s/	cats	Mark's	walks

Similarly, the regular past tense and regular past participle suffixes (they take the same form) are pronounced /əd/ after /t/ and /d/ (e.g., *wanted*, *scolded*) but /d/ after all voiced sounds other than /d/ (e.g., *played*, *judged*), and /t/ after all voiceless sounds other than /t/ (e.g., *walked*, *kissed*).

## SYNTACTICALLY RELEVANT LEXICAL FEATURES

### Determiners/Adjectives Plus Nouns

Nouns, adjectives, and verbs all have syntactically important lexical features. Within noun phrases, determiner-noun restrictions are important because a few determiners co-occur only with uncountable nouns (e.g., *much* and *little*), other determiners co-occur only with singular countable nouns (e.g., *a/an*, *each*), and still others co-occur only with plural countable nouns (e.g., *these*, *many*, *few*). Note that some adjectives also co-occur only with plural nouns (e.g., *various*, *divergent*). There are, of course, also determiners that may occur with all nouns irrespective of countability or number (e.g., *the*, *my*, *his*). However, to ensure that only grammatical sequences are produced, the countability and number restrictions of all determiners and nouns must be explicitly stated in their lexical entries in the inventory of lexical items or the lexicon. Nouns have other features that influence syntactic behavior; for example, singular proper nouns referring to people (e.g., *John*, *Mr. Jackson*, *Albert Einstein*) do not co-occur with articles; however, common nouns referring to people do (e.g., *a man*, *the men*, *some men*). More is said about these matters in Chapter 15, which deals with article usage.

Adjective + object  
must have prep

### Adjective-Prepositional Phrase Restrictions

Adjectives that follow the verb *be* or some other copula are similar to verbs in that they may take objects (function transitively); however, unlike verbs, adjectives that take objects must have a preposition before the object noun. Some adjectives are inherently intransitive, which means that they are not usually followed by prepositions and noun objects:

Joe is handsome.

Mary is graceful.

Other adjectives are intrinsically transitive and cannot occur without an object:

Sue is fond of sweets. (\*Sue is fond.)

John is related to Ralph. (\*John is related.)

However, some adjectives can be used both transitively and intransitively without a change of meaning in the adjective itself—that is, the noun object limits the scope of the adjective but does not change its meaning. For example:

Sally is nervous. Sally is nervous about the quiz.

All information about the transitivity or intransitivity of adjectives must be included in their lexical entries.

### Verb-noun Restrictions

The most complicated lexical restrictions in English involve verbs. First, we must distinguish between verbs that take objects (i.e., transitive verbs) and verbs that do not take objects (i.e., intransitive verbs). This information is specified in the lexical entries of verbs.

The lexical feature (-transitive) for *disappear* and (+transitive) for *bring* allow us to accept these sentences as grammatical:

The stain disappeared.  
The man brought a gift.

and help us explain the unacceptability of sentences such as these:

\*The drycleaners disappeared the stain.  
\*The man brought.

Some verbs occur both transitively and intransitively with little or no change of meaning. These are ergative or change-of-state verbs, where the direct object in the transitive sentence is the same as the subject of the verb in the intransitive one:

John opened the door. The door opened.  
Inflation increased prices. Prices increased.

These verbs would be marked (+/- transitive) in the lexicon.

There is also a special class of transitive verbs that permits the absence of a partially recoverable, understood noun object:

Bill smokes cigarettes. Bill smokes.  
Harry drinks alcohol. Harry drinks.

Such verbs are, nonetheless, consistently transitive and would be marked as such in the lexicon with the added specification that a semantically recoverable object need not appear in the sentence containing such a verb. The semantic features of the partially recoverable object(s) must also be specified in the lexical entries of such verbs.

Finally, ditransitive, linking, complex transitive, and prepositional verbs (see previous chapter) all have qualities that would have to be indicated in the lexicon. For instance, the fact that prepositional verbs require an adverbial of location, direction, or a recipient (which can often be expressed either as a prepositional object or an indirect object):

location: <i>The child lay on the bed.</i>	* <i>The child lay.</i>
direction: <i>The boy headed home.</i>	* <i>The boy headed.</i>
recipient: <i>I handed the note to John.</i> (or, <i>I handed John the note</i> )	* <i>I handed the note.</i>

would also be indicated as a semantic feature of this category of verbs.

### Co-occurrence Restrictions Involving Prepositions

Frequently, a verb or a transitive adjective must be followed by a particular preposition (e.g., *to rely on X*, *to distinguish X from Y*, *to be cognizant of X*). Similarly, a given noun phrase must be preceded by a given preposition (e.g., *in my opinion*, *to my mind*, *from my point of view*) and sometimes followed by one, too (e.g., *in lieu of*, *with regard to*). Whenever new words are introduced to ESL/EFL students, we recommend the prepositions with which they co-occur be introduced as well. With these and other co-occurring forms, ESL/EFL students will need a great deal of practice.

### PRODUCTIVE LEXICAL PROCESSES

In addition to fairly structured lexical information such as we have given in the previous examples, the lexicon also contains rules governing three productive processes of English

word formation; compounding, derivational affixation, and conversion. It is important to understand these as well, for these processes are responsible, in part, for new entries into the lexicon.

### Compounding

Compounding, or putting together existing words to form a new lexical unit (*rain + coat = raincoat*), is a word-formation process that occurs in some languages. For example, the Germanic languages (this includes English) and the Chinese languages make rich use of compounding, whereas other languages make much less use of this process. According to the *Collins Cobuild English Grammar*, almost any noun can modify any other noun in English. Take the noun *house*, for instance. We have *household, housemate, house sitter, houseboat, house arrest, housebound, housebreaking, housebroken, houseguest, housefly, housekeeper, houselights, housewarming, housewife, househusband, housework*, and this list is not exhaustive, by any means. Many parts of speech can be combined in this way, sometimes ending up as one word, sometimes as two or more (e.g., *bathroom towel rack*).

Some of the most frequent English compounding patterns are:

- noun + noun: *stone wall, baby blanket, rainbow*
- noun + verb: *homemade, rainfall, lip-read*
- noun + verb-er: *baby-sitter, can opener, screwdriver*
- adj. + noun: *blackbird, greenhouse, cold cream*
- adj./adv. + noun + -en: *quick-frozen, nearsighted, dim-witted*
- prep. + noun: *overlord, underdog, underworld*
- prep. + verb: *underestimate, undercut, overstep*
- verb + particle: *makeup, breakdown, stakeout*

ESL/EFL students who speak a native language with little word compounding or with very different rules of word compounding may have trouble understanding and using compound words in English. Such learners may paraphrase and say “the sheet of the bed” instead of “the bedsheet” or may even reverse the order of elements in a compound and say “wine table” when they intend to say “tablewine.”

As can be seen, the spelling of compound words proves a further complication because some are written as one word, some as two words, and some are hyphenated. Sometimes the same word is written in more than one way: *baby sitter, baby-sitter, or babysitter*, with the spelling as two words eventually coalescing into one compound word after a period of use. Students have to be taught to use their dictionaries when in doubt about the proper spelling.

### Derivational Affixation

Earlier, we introduced the eight inflectional affixes of English. English words can also have derivational affixes, affixes that combine with stem (or base) forms to derive new words. Derivational affixes can be prefixes, which often change the meaning (*expatriate, unrepentant*), or suffixes, which usually change the part of speech of the word stem (*washable, childish*). In fact, it is possible for a word stem to have both a derivational prefix and suffix (*unthinkable*) or more than one suffix (*governmental*).<sup>2</sup>

ESL/EFL teachers should help their students learn the most common and useful derivational prefixes (e.g., *anti-, bi-, inter-, intra-, pre-, un-*) and suffixes (e.g., *-able, -er, -ism, -ist, -less, -ness*). This will help students expand their productive and receptive vocabularies. It is also worthwhile to spend some time on the common suffixes whose major function is to change one part of speech into another. For example, *-ous, -ary, and -ful* transform nouns into adjectives such as *famous, customary, successful*; and *-ness* and *-ity* transform adjectives into nouns such as *happiness* and *serenity*.

It should be noted, however, that which words take which affixes is not always predictable. Students will sometimes attempt a new form with a derivational suffix that does not work (*\*suggestion*) or will think that a word has a common prefix, when in fact the “prefix” is part of the root (e.g., *relay*; *resent*). There is also potential confusion (on native English speakers’ parts as well) when having to choose between two words with different morphology that seem to be opposites, or at least different, but that actually have very similar meanings (e.g., *invaluable/valuable*; *slow up/slow down*; *admission/admittance*; *joyful/joyous*).

A final point to be made is that when both a derivational and an inflectional suffix are fixed to the same word, the inflectional suffix occurs last.

weaknesses

\*weakness

### Conversion

The other important productive lexical process in English is conversion. This occurs when one part of speech is converted into another part of speech, without any derivational affixation. Most conversion in English takes place when the underlying verb has a very general meaning, and the meaning of a noun object (direct or prepositional) becomes incorporated into the verb to show that something has been (1) added, (2) taken away, or (3) used for something.

1. He put butter on his bread. → He *buttered* his bread.  
He poured water on the plants. → He *watered* the plants.
2. Jo removed dust from the desk. → Jo *dusted* the desk.  
I took the pits out of the dates. → I *pitted* the dates.
3. He cut the log with a saw. → He *sawed* the log.  
Sue gathered the leaves with a rake. → She *raked* the leaves.

This is a very productive process, and new words, or rather new functions for extant words, are always being coined. We recently heard someone say “That book was a good read!” and novel conversions often accompany innovations; for example, we now *e-mail* messages and *fedex* packages.

The example with *read* reminds us to mention that even though the dominant English conversion pattern occurs when noun meanings are incorporated into verbs, sometimes other parts of speech are involved. In the example, the verb *read* is nominalized.<sup>3</sup> In the following case, a prepositional meaning is incorporated into the verb:

Hal walked across the street. → Hal *crossed* the street.

### HOMONYMY AND POLYSEMY

Finally, we should acknowledge here that sometimes words have the same form but different meanings, as in *bear* (an animal, to carry). With such homonyms, there is identity of spelling and sound, but it is possible to have identity with regard to only one of these. When it is sound, it is called *homophony* (*there, their, they're*), and when it is spelling, it is called *homography* (*wind blowing* versus *wind the clock*). Sometimes the part of speech is the same, but the meaning is different: *live* in *He lives* (= resides) in *Bangor* versus *He lives* (= is alive). In such cases, we have an example of *polysemy*, when one form with the same part of speech has a range of meanings.<sup>4</sup>

Homophones, homographs, and especially, polysemous forms represent problems for ESL/EFL students. Early on in their acquisition of vocabulary, students often adhere to the “one form, one meaning” principle. Since polysemous words are the most

common words in the lexicon, confusion can reign. When students are struggling to understand a particular lexical item, sometimes it makes more sense to use a lower-frequency word to define it in order to avoid the ambiguity that can occur when using a word with more than one meaning. For example, we have found from our own teaching of beginning-level students, the polysemous adjective *hard* gets misconstrued, though the adjective *difficult* does not, when used to describe a question students find challenging.

An additional challenge in working with polysemy with ESL/EFL students is that sometimes a word in one language will share some of the meanings of the word in another language, but not all. Thus, a Spanish speaker learning English might be heard to speak of the *fingers* on his foot, as the Spanish word for fingers includes what English speakers have a separate lexical item for, *toes*. A related problem is the occurrence of *faux amis*, or false cognates—words that look as if they share the same meaning, but do not. For example, the French word *librairie* corresponds to *bookstore*, not *library* in English. These last two examples hint at the difficulties of relying on translation from the lexicon of one language to another. We will have more to say about this when discussing connotations of words.

## THE MEANING OF LEXICAL ITEMS

As must have been apparent in part of our discussion of the processes of derivational affixation and conversion, and certainly in our explanation of polysemy, we have begun to cross the line from the form of lexical items to their meaning. In this section, we will first discuss other aspects of semantic features of words before turning to consider other issues involved with the semantics of the lexicon.

### SEMANTIC FEATURES AND RESTRICTIONS

The information given in lexical entries also allows us to account for semantic well-formedness (or semantic incompatibility) in several types of constructions:

*subject-verb:*

- |                           |                       |
|---------------------------|-----------------------|
| 1. a. The idea developed. | b. *The idea laughed. |
| 2. a. The dog sneezed.    | b. *The worm sneezed. |

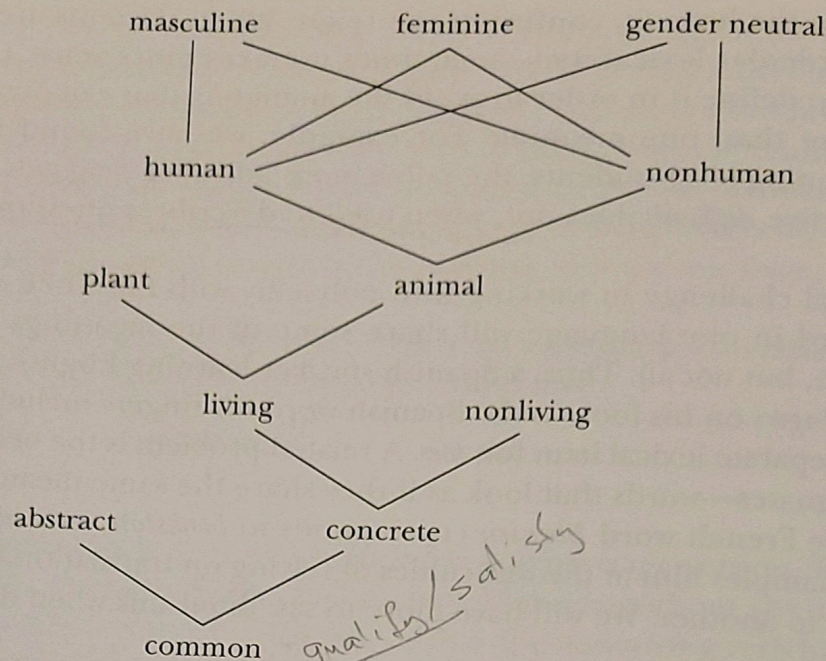
*verb-object:*

- |   |                                  |
|---|----------------------------------|
| 3. a. The harsh winter killed the plants. | b. *The winter killed the rocks. |
|---|----------------------------------|

*adjective-noun:*

- |                                  |                                  |
|----------------------------------|----------------------------------|
| 4. a. The basement was mildewed. | b. *The government was mildewed. |
| 5. a. The mare was pregnant.     | b. *The stallion was pregnant.   |

We can account for the above incompatibilities in terms of a hierarchy of semantic features (going from low to high): common nouns are abstract or concrete, and concrete nouns are living or nonliving; living nouns are plant or animal, and animal nouns are human or nonhuman; finally, human and nonhuman animal nouns are masculine, feminine, or gender neutral.<sup>5</sup>



Our hierarchy is simplified, but it will suffice to demonstrate why sentences 1b through 5b are unacceptable. Nouns with features at the bottom of the hierarchy are excluded when a higher feature is required; for example, the verb *laugh* in 1b requires a human subject, so any noun lower on the features hierarchy is excluded semantically. Although not reflected in our hierarchy, it is probably necessary to divide nonhuman animals into higher and lower animals because dogs and horses can “sneeze” or be “intelligent” but worms and centipedes cannot (2b). Only living nouns can literally be killed, so that leaves 3b unacceptable; and only concrete (as opposed to abstract) nouns can literally be involved in action or processes such as falling, breaking, and mildewing, accounting for the unacceptability of 4b (although we admit it has appeal as a metaphor—see the next section in this chapter). Finally, the adjective *pregnant* modifies or describes a mature female animal, hence the unacceptability of 5b. All such semantic co-occurrence restrictions should be entered in the lexicon. The lexical entries of verbs must specify any semantic restrictions regarding the noun subjects and objects they normally take, and the lexical entries of adjectives must specify any semantic restrictions regarding the nouns they can modify.

Most of these semantic restrictions are probably universal and thus are not something we have to teach ESL/EFL learners;<sup>6</sup> however, they still constitute information that is included in the lexical entry of words and is part of lexical meaning. One of the most interesting things about these restrictions is that they are often violated in extension of meaning and figurative usage (e.g., *a pregnant pause, a broken heart*). And it is in these meaning extensions that languages differ.

### MEANING EXTENSION

The lexicon is also where general processes of meaning extension should be described, since a great many word meanings are figurative or metaphorical rather than (or in addition to) being literal. Indeed, it is the deliberate violation of these semantic constraints that results in the rich imagery of poetic language. For example, the following examples show how descriptions of natural phenomena can be coded as actions without external agents or even as personified human-like action:

**Nature as Action**

The wind blew.  
The brook flooded.  
The saplings swayed.

**Nature Personified**

The wind whispered.  
The brook roared.  
The saplings danced.

Ascribing action and personification to nature represent common meaning extensions. Lakoff and Johnson, in their book *Metaphors We Live By*, show just how pervasive our use of metaphoric language is. For example the "container" metaphor is used frequently in English as a normal extension of meaning:

**Literal**

Put it into the basket.  
He's in the garage.

**Metaphoric**

Put it into words.  
He's in love.

Sometimes the same expression has both literal and figurative meaning, and the connection between literal and figurative use is not as obvious as in the previous examples. The nonobvious interpretation then becomes an *idiom*, a notoriously difficult type of lexical item for language learners:

It's in the bag. (= the object is located in the bag) *literal*  
(= the proposal is a reality/accepted) *idiomatic*

Familiarity with the extensions of meaning, the metaphors, and the idioms commonly employed in everyday language (and also, of course, in fable, allegories, poems, etc.) can be a great asset to learners in acquiring a new language.

**DENOTATIONS, CONNOTATIONS, AND CULTURAL ASSOCIATIONS**

A word's *denotation* is its dictionary definition or referential meaning. For example, a cat is a feline quadruped. A *connotation* is the emotional association with a word. This association can be personal (as, for example, positive associations with the word for the month of your birth), or communal. With regard to the latter, Wierzbicka (1986) shows that while *only*, *merely*, and *just* all denote "It is not more than X" in the frame

I am going to buy that pen. It is { *only*, *merely*, *just* } 50 cents.

their connotations for English speakers are different. *Only* is more neutral, whereas *merely* is depreciative, and *just* is mildly positive. Another example from Wierzbicka shows this even better: the expression *just for fun* could be used as an advertising slogan, but *merely for fun* wouldn't work to sell much!

When it comes to the communal or shared connotations of lexical items, we can see how much our frame of reference influences the interpretations we give to words. Fillmore (1995) cites the tongue-in-cheek definition of *boy* from *A Feminist Dictionary*, compiled by Kramarae and Treichler (1985):

**boy.** A male youth (cared for primarily by women) who is in training to support the institutions which state that his caretakers are kindly but otherwise inferior beings.

We can begin to appreciate how difficult it is to expect that a word in one language will have an equivalent in another. Wierzbicka (1988) points out that even concrete concepts such as *mouse* have culture-specific associations, determined by speakers' interests and attitudes as much as by any denotation. Although students will naturally

resort to translating from their native language, as much as possible the lexical items of English should be learned in their own right and within context.

### LEXICAL ASPECT: SEMANTIC CLASSES OF VERBS

Verbs in any language can be classified according to the type of action or state they describe (Vendler 1967). Some verbs, for example, are inherently punctual, such as *kick* or *hit*, meaning that the action is momentary, having no duration. Another category contains verbs that are inherently durative, such as *live* or *work*; use of these verbs implies that the action takes place over time. This semantic feature is often referred to as “lexical aspect,” a topic we discuss in detail in Chapter 7, which deals with tense and aspect in English. What is significant about the lexical aspect of verbs is that they express different meanings when they combine with certain grammatical morphemes. For example, punctual verbs take on an iterative meaning when they combine with the progressive (*be . . . -ing*), whereas durative verbs take on a sense of “temporariness” with the progressive.

She is hitting the rug with a stick in order to clean it. (repeatedly)

She is working in Halifax for the summer. (temporarily)

We could cite many other categories of verbs in which the meaning of the verb affects other aspects of the sentence, such as what kind of complement structure—gerund or infinitive—follows the verb. We will deal with these categories as they arise in connection with particular grammar structures. For now, though, these observations should remind us of why the term *lexicogrammar* is an appropriate hybrid.

### ARGUMENT STRUCTURE OF VERBS

Closely related to the noun-verb syntactic restrictions and the notions of transitivity we discussed above is the more semantic notion of “argument structure,” a term used by linguists and philosophers to describe the number of nouns or participants (i.e., arguments) typically associated with a verb and the relationship that those nouns have with the verb. If a verb takes one argument, in English it is intransitive and the noun argument functions as the subject.

*One argument:* Milly jogs.

If the verb takes two arguments, one noun argument will function as the subject; however, the other noun argument could function as a direct object or as a locative prepositional phrase, or it could have some other role.

*Two arguments:* Lloyd drank the beer.  
Andrew lives in Richmond.

If the verb takes three arguments, one noun argument will function as the subject, one will function as the indirect object or recipient, and the other may function as a direct object; or the three arguments might function as subject, direct object, and locative prepositional phrase.

*Three arguments:* Len gave me a book.  
Rhonda put the vase on the table.

Some arguments are optional. For example, a change-of-state verb like *open* must have as an argument the object that opens. Optionally, it can also have an argument that expresses the agent, or cause, of the opening:

*close*

One or two arguments:     The door opened.  
                                       John opened the door.

Finally, some arguments are inherent in the semantic structure of a verb but do not have to be expressed in a specific noun and can be interpreted very generally. For example, the verb *eat* always takes two arguments, but the direct object need not be overtly expressed:

John ate a sandwich.  
 John ate.

Fillmore's approach to distinguishing verb meanings (1968) shows one application of the notion of semantic features and argument structure of verbs that we have been discussing. Beginning with the following examples, Fillmore proceeds to elaborate the semantic distinctions that must be captured in the lexical entries of the verbs *touch*, *strike*, and *break*.

1. Peter touched the window.
2. Peter struck the window.
3. Peter broke the window.

Fillmore points out that *break* in 3 is different from *touch* in 1 and *strike* in 2 in that 3 has a related intransitive sentence that the other two verbs do not have—that is, one of the noun arguments is optional:

4. \*The window touched.
5. \*The window struck.
6. The window broke.

*Intransitive sentence*

In addition, the verb *break* seems to require that its object be rigid, while *touch* and *strike* do not share this requirement. Consider these examples:

7. Peter touched the dog.
8. Peter struck the dog.
9. ?Peter broke the dog.

In 7 and 8, the dog can be a living animal, and the difference in meaning is one of relative intensity of impact: striking denotes a stronger, sharper impact than touching. In 9, however, the dog has to be an inanimate figure made of something breakable, such as plaster, ceramic, or glass.

Fillmore made several other useful generalizations about these verbs, but these examples demonstrate that understanding a lexical item entails, among other things, knowing precisely how it differs from other similar items. This brings us to the issue of semantic fields.

## SEMANTIC FIELDS

As we have been attempting to show, words can often be really understood only in terms of their relationship to other words. On a very simple level, when an ESL student asks what *wet* means, perhaps the best explanation would be to use its *antonym*, or opposite, and reply, *not dry*. This explanation would not work, of course, unless the student knew the meaning of the antonym.

Another concept that is helpful in defining words in relation to other words is the concept of *semantic field*, a cluster of words that cover a particular semantic area and can best be understood in relation to one another. Examples of semantic fields most often cited are kinship terms and terms for colors in a language. The precise meaning of a color word can best be understood by seeing it in relation to other words that cover the spectrum.

Even though defining colors is difficult, as there isn't necessarily a one-to-one correspondence between languages, they can be illustrated more easily than words in other semantic fields. Take, for example, adjectives denoting physical attractiveness (*beautiful, lovely, pretty, attractive, good-looking, handsome, etc.*), items from the same semantic field, which therefore have some features in common. We could apply a semantic feature analysis (also called a componential analysis) by listing the features across the horizontal axis of a grid and the words belonging to the same semantic field along the vertical axis.

**TABLE 3.1 A SEMANTIC FEATURE ANALYSIS**

	making a pleasant impression on the senses	close to an ideal	suggesting relative smallness	suggesting femininity or delicacy	arousing interest
beautiful	X	X			
pretty	X		X	X	
attractive	X				X

jump-bounce

Adapted from Gairns and Redman (1986).

Even this abbreviated analysis of the semantic features shows that we can to some extent become more precise about the meaning of a word. These three words—*beautiful, pretty, attractive*—are not synonyms. Such an analysis, modified for the sake of comprehension, may assist ESL/EFL students who ask about the differences among words in a semantic field. Still, even this level of precision is not very satisfying. While such an analysis can assist us in being able to detect differences among these items, it should also be clear that this type of discrete feature analysis can also be misleading. For one thing, we may not agree on the exact defining features of a word. For another, it may be impossible to pin down all the semantic nuances of a word in sufficient detail. Leech (1981) suggests that most words have “fuzzy” meanings.

### PROTOTYPICALITY

To explore further the fuzziness of meaning, consider the notion of prototypicality. It is well known that mammals have certain characteristics: They are furry, they give birth to live offspring, and they nurse their young, for instance. And yet, it is also well known that certain animals are classified as mammals even though they do not meet all the criteria (e.g., a platypus lays eggs but is considered a mammal). As Givón (1993) reminds us, membership in natural categories is not determined by rigid adherence to all criteria. Rather, membership is determined by a cluster of criteria. Further, some of these criteria are more central than others. Thus we might say that a bear is a more prototypical mammal than a platypus.

To take a linguistic example, there are many verbs of speaking: *say, tell, speak, talk, mention, remark, comment, shout, whisper*, and so on. Were we to perform a componential analysis of these verbs and others in their semantic class, we would find that some of the features are true of some of the verbs but not true of others. You saw this earlier with adjectives of physical attractiveness. We would also see, however, that some of the features are more central for membership in the class than others. For instance, that they all have to do with oracy is central, while the manner in which the oracy is performed is only encoded in two of the verbs and is therefore less central. If someone were to ask us to give an example of a prototypic verb of speech, we would most likely choose one of the first

four on the list. We revisit the concept of prototypicality later in this book. As Lewis (1997) reminds us, considerations of prototypicality are very important when thinking of examples to give ESL/EFL students of a certain lexicogrammatical phenomenon.

## THE USE OF LEXICAL ITEMS

You may be asking yourself why we have not yet mentioned true synonymy—two words with the same meaning. The reason is simple. Rarely will two linguistic forms mean exactly the same thing, for if they did, there would be little reason to have them both in the language. Thus, at best we can talk about partial synonymy. We do not mean to dismiss the use of synonyms, for giving a partial synonym is often the most efficient way of giving students the meaning of a particular word. It is important, though, to remain cognizant of the differences between words and, in the case of more intermediate and advanced students, to highlight the semantic differences. It is also true that what distinguishes words is not always their semantic differences; words can differ because of the area of their use: different dialects (e.g., British English *lorry* versus North American English *truck*); different registers (e.g., *friend* versus *buddy*); or they are age-graded, meaning that a certain age group will use them (e.g., adolescents using *cool* as an adjective of approval); or they are no longer fashionable (e.g., adolescents today would not accept *groovy* as a substitute for *cool*).

Whatever one learns about the meaning and formal requirements of a lexical item, one cannot ignore the context in which it is used. For example, Carter and McCarthy (1988) discuss the example of the word *stocking*, which takes on quite a different meaning when it refers to silk or nylon stockings as opposed to Christmas stockings. The former type of stockings are worn by women, but the latter type are worn by no one. They are simply stocking-shaped containers intended for small Christmas gifts or simply Christmas decorations attached to a fireplace mantle (or a wall or door).

## COLLOCATION

Certain types of word co-occurrences that are governed by conventional use rather than form or meaning have long been studied under the label *collocation*. For example,

adjective-noun: *a tall person or building* (not a “high” one)

adverb-adjective: *statistically significant* (not “important”)

verb-direct object: *ask/answer a question* (not “say”/“tell”)

Some collocations are more fixed than others: binomials, such as *high and dry*, *hat and coat*, and *pick and choose*, and trinomials, such as *a king's ransom*, *a handsome/pretty price*, and *a raw deal*. The difference between these fixed collocations and idioms has to do with the transparency of meaning. Idioms have meanings that are difficult to retrieve from the lexical items themselves (e.g., *kick the bucket* as a euphemism for *dying*), whereas words that go together in collocations still retain their lexical meaning. Collocations, therefore, should be decipherable, although here again it is probably better to think of them being on a cline—a continuum of idiomaticity (Fillmore, Kay, and O'Connor 1988).

Computer-assisted corpus research has demonstrated that a great deal of text in English is composed of words in common patterns or in slight variants of these patterns (Sinclair 1991). Gillian Francis (1996), reporting on the 320-million-word Cobuild corpus of British, American, and Australian English, claimed that researchers have identified over

700 patterns that are blends of lexical and grammatical elements. One such pattern, for example, consist of patterns with the verb *insist*:

*insist (that)*

*insist on*

*insist on Verbing*

*insist on Noun Phrase*

*insist + quote*

One conclusion we can derive from this observation is simply that words don't occur randomly. Once you have chosen a word, you are severely limited in your choice of what comes next. The second point underscores what we have alluded to several times already. When it comes to performance, syntax and lexicon are intertwined.

Halliday and Hasan (1976) use the term lexical collocation in another sense. They refer to the expectation that other words will occur in a text (oral or written) once a particular word has occurred. Thus, if the word *professor* occurs in ongoing text, one might expect other words such as *lecture*, *university*, *teach*, or *publish* to occur. However, this is a much more general use of the term lexical collocation, and it seems to refer to related or associated vocabulary on a specific topic rather than the syntactically constrained collocations we have been discussing. One would expect the syntactically constrained collocations to appear as lexical information in the lexicon but not necessarily the more general topic-driven associations.

### LEXICAL PHRASES, OR LEXICALIZED SENTENCE STEMS

Collocations are groups of words that occur together. Lexical phrases are also groups of words that co-occur; the difference is that lexical phrases serve specific functions. For example, the phrase *by the way* serves the function of enabling the speaker to shift the topic in discourse (Nattinger and DeCarrico 1992). As with collocations, some lexical phrases are more fixed than others: *at any rate* and *what on earth* are fixed; a phrase like *a \_\_\_\_\_ N [+ time] ago* is more open, allowing any noun of time (e.g., *day*, *week*) to fill the slot; also open is *as far as I \_\_\_\_\_*, allowing certain verbs such as *know* or *can tell*, to complete the lexical phrase.

While Nattinger and DeCarrico write of conventionalized form-function composites, Pawley and Syder (1983) use the term "lexicalized sentence stems" for regular form-meaning pairings.<sup>7</sup> They claim that English speakers know hundreds of thousands of such lexical units in which the grammatical form and lexical content are wholly or largely fixed but which are not true idioms.

Lexicalized sentence stems can be clause length or multiclausal:

- |                       |  |
|-----------------------|--|
| <i>Clause length:</i> | What's for dinner?<br>Need any help?<br>You would ask that question.   |
| <i>Multiclausal:</i>  | I told him, but he wouldn't listen.<br>Be careful what you're doing with that.<br>If I'd known then, what I I know now . . . |

In addition, according to Pawley and Syder, many semilexicalized (because they are less fixed) sequences possess permissible expansions or substitutions. In such cases, a formula can be extracted that consists of a nucleus of lexical and grammatical morphemes, which normally include the verb and certain of its arguments, as well as one or more structural elements represented by a category symbol such as TENSE, NP (noun phrase), or PRO (pronoun). For example, in the conventional expressions of apology for tardiness,

I'm sorry to keep you waiting.  
 I'm so sorry to have kept you waiting.  
 Mr. X is sorry to keep you waiting all this time.

a recurrent formula can be isolated together with a grammatical frame:

NP be-TENSE sorry to keep-TENSE you waiting

While lexical phrases and lexicalized sentence stems adhere for the most part to rules of English syntax, some are "extragrammatical" (Fillmore, Kay and O'Connor 1988) or "non-canonical" (Nattinger and DeCarrico 1992). Consider the phrases *sight unseen*, *all of a sudden*, and *so far; so good*; each has a grammatical structure, but not one predictable from the rules of English. Nevertheless, canonical and noncanonical phrases exist in other languages as well and perform the same functions as they do in English (Nattinger and DeCarrico 1992), so their existence and behavior should not come as a surprise to ESL/EFL students.

It has been known for some time that many beginning first and second language learners make use of large lexical units, giving them a fluency that they wouldn't ordinarily be capable of at such an early stage of acquisition. Bolinger maintains that a child learns collocations by hearing them in a variety of concrete contexts and later analyzing and abstracting the meaning of individual words (Bolinger 1976). Then, too, evidence suggests that by later analyzing the stock of formulas they have acquired, learners are able to induce the grammatical rules and regular patterns of the target language (Wong Fillmore 1976). In addition, no doubt, like native speakers of English, learners retain many of the lexical phrases and sentence stems as wholes because they conveniently fulfill certain functions or convey certain meanings.

### DISCOURSE COMMUNITIES

We mentioned earlier the effect of cultural differences with regard to the connotation of words. Other linguistic differences have been viewed from a cultural perspective as well. For example, Atkinson and Ramanathan (1995) showed the disadvantage that nonnative speakers of English experience when their ESL writing instructors operate with a different set of cultural norms about what academic writing is than do instructors of writing classes for native speakers.

Other differences accompany divergent social practices or discourses (Gee 1990). Within each discourse community, certain norms exist concerning what constitutes appropriate ways of speaking or writing. For example, an educational administrator might say,

*Prior to the administration of the assessment instrument, a skills-level analysis must be conducted to ascertain the critical level of preparedness of the target population.*

whereas a classroom teacher might say,

*Before we give the test, we'd better find out if these particular students are ready for it.*

So, *assessment instruments are administered* and *tests are given*. The administrator's statement might seem wordy and obscure compared with the teacher's simple and direct way of saying the same thing. However, it is important to remember that language does not serve only to express propositional meaning. A particular discourse functions as "a sort of 'identity kit', which comes complete with [ways] to act, talk, and often write, so as to take on a particular social role that others will recognize" (Gee 1990: 42). Clearly, however, knowing a language is not simply knowing a phrase book.

It would seem that when language is formulaic, lexical items and conventions of use (i.e., collocations and lexical phrases) appear to be extremely important, whereas when language is more original and less formulaic, where precision and disambiguation are crucial, then the

grammatical end of the continuum is more important than the lexical. As Nyssönen (1995) notes, it follows that if the learner could make appropriate and effective use of the collocations and lexical phrases that are routinely employed by native speakers in large quantities, and if the learner could also make use of grammar to adapt the patterns as necessary and to achieve contextual fit, his or her language acquisition process would be well served.

## CONCLUSION

The information that nonnative speakers of English must master regarding the lexicon is extensive. It is not sufficient simply to know many lexical items and their general meanings. For each item, nonnative speakers must master a network of related information about its form, meaning, and use if they wish to use the item accurately, meaningfully, and appropriately. Also, clearly, we can no longer think of the lexicon as a list of words having specified properties subject to combinatory rules. We must think of the lexicon as being composed of multiword units as well.

Despite the complexity of what we have presented here, we must introduce yet another level of difficulty. We have treated the lexicon as a static inventory. In fact, the lexicon is anything but static. It has been estimated that English increases by about 20,000 words annually. At a more local level, it has also been argued that many of the features and constraints that we have treated here as part of a lexical item, are in fact, mutable in dynamic discourse. For example, Thompson and Hopper (1997) have asserted that argument structure isn't a fixed property of predicates in the mental lexicon but rather is fluid and adaptable to conversational goals. Clearly, language is both product and process. While we deal more with language as product in this book, we acknowledge that both perspectives are necessary, and so we return to consider the dynamism of language at several points further on in this book.

## TEACHING SUGGESTIONS

**1. Form.** When teaching vocabulary, it is good not just to teach words but to teach clusters of information that will help students to use the words correctly. For example: use *a/an* when introducing countable nouns (e.g., *a theory*); use *to* when introducing verbs (e.g., *to arrive*); show that verbs are transitive by adding an indefinite object such as *something* (*to propose something*); and use *to be* when introducing adjectives (e.g., *to be naive*). Also indicate any prepositions needed, where relevant (e.g., *to be interested in something*).

**2. Form.** Recommend to students that they use good learners' dictionaries to find grammatical information themselves. In addition, dictionary activities can ask students to find collocations either from the grammatical column of the *Collins Cobuild Dictionary* or from the examples in other dictionaries.

- a. Find two adjectives that can go before the noun *tone*.
- b. What two prepositions can be used after the noun *rejection*?
- c. Is *arouse* a transitive or intransitive verb? Find three nouns that go before or after the verb *arouse*.

**3. Form.** Nation (1990: 151) suggests an inductive method to draw students' attention to the form of words, using exercises like the following:

- a. Look at the word *insanity* in this sentence. What part of speech is it? Is it countable or uncountable? How do you know this?

He saw the beginning of insanity in her.

- b. Look at *inhabit* in this sentence. What part of speech is it followed by?

Woodpeckers inhabit hollow trees.

**4. Form.** Low-intermediate ESL/EFL students often confuse the related forms of a word associated with different parts of speech. If a new vocabulary item has related forms in other parts of speech, these words should also be introduced with example sentences that make the parts of speech easily distinguished but that make the learner actively discriminate with the fill-in-the-blank process. For example:

a theory          to theorize          to be theoretical

Cynthia is very (1) \_\_\_\_\_ about everything. She has just developed a new (2) \_\_\_\_\_. She (3) \_\_\_\_\_ that the less one works, the more one will succeed at certain tasks.

**5. Meaning.** To encourage students to use productive word-formation processes that have been introduced to them, contextualized definition exercises such as the following can be useful:

- a. A \_\_\_\_\_ is a machine that detects smoke in a home, school, or office building and sounds an alarm.  
 b. Someone who believes in and follows the ideas of Marx is called a \_\_\_\_\_.  
 c. A person who employs others is an (1) employer; a person who is employed by someone else is an (2) employee.

**6. Meaning.** Intermediate to advanced-level students often confuse related derivations that have the same root and are the same part of speech, such as the following adjectives:

various          discriminating          identifying          fortunate  
 varied          discriminatory          identifiable          fortuitous

Exercises that teach students to distinguish such forms provide contexts that call for one or the other, but not both, such as the forms *discriminating* or *discriminatory*:

- a. The minority students complained because they felt some of the school regulations were \_\_\_\_\_.  
 b. I knew that I could trust his judgment; he has \_\_\_\_\_ taste in such matters.

Students should understand why the words have the same root and part of speech (i.e., what the similarity in meaning is) yet why the words are different (i.e., what the crucial distinction is).

**7. Use.** For more controlled work on collocations, McCarthy and O'Dell (1994:5) suggest using "word forks" or matrices, such as the following:

original	}	idea
brilliant		
unusual		
great		
excellent		

He saw the beginning of insanity in her.

- b. Look at *inhabit* in this sentence. What part of speech is it followed by?

Woodpeckers inhabit hollow trees.

**4. Form.** Low-intermediate ESL/EFL students often confuse the related forms of a word associated with different parts of speech. If a new vocabulary item has related forms in other parts of speech, these words should also be introduced with example sentences that make the parts of speech easily distinguished but that make the learner actively discriminate with the fill-in-the-blank process. For example:

a theory          to theorize          to be theoretical

Cynthia is very (1) \_\_\_\_\_ about everything. She has just developed a new (2) \_\_\_\_\_. She (3) \_\_\_\_\_ that the less one works, the more one will succeed at certain tasks.

**5. Meaning.** To encourage students to use productive word-formation processes that have been introduced to them, contextualized definition exercises such as the following can be useful:

- A \_\_\_\_\_ is a machine that detects smoke in a home, school, or office building and sounds an alarm.
- Someone who believes in and follows the ideas of Marx is called a \_\_\_\_\_.
- A person who employs others is an (1) employer; a person who is employed by someone else is an (2) employee.

**6. Meaning.** Intermediate to advanced-level students often confuse related derivations that have the same root and are the same part of speech, such as the following adjectives:

various	discriminating	identifying	fortunate
varied	discriminatory	identifiable	fortuitous

Exercises that teach students to distinguish such forms provide contexts that call for one or the other, but not both, such as the forms *discriminating* or *discriminatory*:

- The minority students complained because they felt some of the school regulations were \_\_\_\_\_.
- I knew that I could trust his judgment; he has \_\_\_\_\_ taste in such matters.

Students should understand why the words have the same root and part of speech (i.e., what the similarity in meaning is) yet why the words are different (i.e., what the crucial distinction is).

**7. Use.** For more controlled work on collocations, McCarthy and O'Dell (1994:5) suggest using "word forks" or matrices, such as the following:

- a. word fork

original	}	idea
brilliant		
unusual		
great		
excellent		

b. matrix

	a car	a motorbike	a bus	a horse	a plane
to fly					+
to drive	+		+		
to ride		+		+	

8. Use. Norbert Schmitt (in Nation 1994:148) suggests a game of collocation bingo, in which the teacher reads out a list of words, and students have bingo cards containing words that collocate with the teacher's words. Students write the word they hear in the same square as a word on their card that they think collocates with it. The normal game of bingo proceeds.

9. Use. As a consciousness-raising activity, bring in, or have your students bring in, several texts, two to three paragraphs in length, that all deal with the same topic in a particular discipline. Guide students in conducting a search for lexical patterns that appear to be norms of the particular discourse community from which the texts come.

## EXERCISES

### Test your understanding of what has been presented.

1. Provide an original sentence illustrating each of the following terms. Underline the pertinent word(s) or word parts in your example.
  - a. verbs requiring a locative prepositional phrase
  - b. determiner requiring a mass noun
  - c. conversion
  - d. change-of-state verb
  - e. compound word
  - f. derivational affix
  - g. inflectional affix
  - h. transitive adjective
  - i. semantic field
  - j. transitive verb
  - k. verb with three arguments
  - l. irregular plural
  - m. lexical phrase
  - n. durative verb
  - o. verb-direct object collocation
  - p. co-occurrence with a preposition
  - q. adjective-noun collocation
  - r. polysemy
2. Why are the following sentences ungrammatical?
  - a. \*The burglar lurked.
  - b. \*It fascinated the alarm clock.
  - c. \*I don't like these book.
  - d. \*There have to be some breakthrough soon.
  - e. \*Anyone who is a good friend must be trustful.
  - f. \*My favoritism is for coffee, but I also drink tea.

### Test your ability to apply what you know.

3. If your students produce the following utterances, what errors are they making? How would you make them aware of these errors, and what exercises would you prepare to correct them?

- a. \*I got many *informations* from the book.
  - b. \**In* my point of view, I think that's a bad idea.
  - c. ?They are remodeling the streets.
  - d. \*People living in the United States use *crackerfires* on the Fourth of July.
  - e. \*Photography has *passionated* me since I was a child.
  - f. \*Solutions to reduce birth rates, especially within developing countries, need to be met.
  - g. \*Mr. Wilson was not aware *to* his daughter's problems.
  - h. ?*By pure fortune*, we met on the train.
4. How would you answer an ESL/EFL student who asks you what the difference is among the following verbs: *see*, *look*, *watch*, *stare*, *peer*, and *glance*?
  5. How would you answer an ESL/EFL student who asks you why *pretty*, which has to do with beauty, is used with *soon*, in the phrase *pretty soon*.
  6. How would you answer an ESL/EFL student who asked you what the difference was between *owing to* and *due to*?

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