

Slovenian (Rivero, 2001)

a. *Janez se oblaci.*

"John dresses himself." (reflexive/reciprocal)

b. *Ta knjiga se lahko bere.*

"This book reads easily." (middle/passive)

c. *Veja se je zlomila.*

"The branch broke." (inchoative/anticausative)

d. *Marija se boji Janeza*

"Mary fears John." (inherent)

e. *Tukaj se veliko dela.*

"Here people work a lot." (impersonal)

Context and meaning (sense)

Synonyms

1. Collocation- certain synonyms occur only in a given context, i. e., context "selects" one of them rather than the other one. Context 'narrows down' the choices available.

strong

powerful

herd of cattle

pack of dogs

Like idioms (fixed fossilized expressions)

Context and meaning(sense)

Polysemy: context creates new possibilities for the manifestation of meanings.

Cf. Homonymy deals with unrelated meanings

Ambiguity or vagueness?

Vagueness: context adds new meaning components.

Shared meaning (sense).

Ambiguity: context forces one of the meanings to be realized. Several (related) meanings but stored separately

Identity Test

(Do-so test)

John hates broccoli and so does Sue.(=hates broccoli)

She went bankrupt and Bob did too.(=went bankrupt)

Dawn discovered a **mole**, and so did Clark (ambiguous)

Meaning carries over to the second sentence in the compound without changing. This indicates that 'mole' is **ambiguous** in one or more ways.

They hired a publicist and so did we. (vague)

Meaning in the second clause of the compound is vague between female and male publicist.

Sense relations test

A.

*I go for a **run** every morning.*

*I go for a **jog** every morning.*

*??I go for an **enclosure** every morning.*

B.

*He built a new **run** for his chickens.*

*He built a new **enclosure** for his chickens.*

*?? He built a new **jog** for his chickens.*

A. vs B.

Both senses (meanings) appear in two different networks (relations). This shows that the word is **ambiguous** between these 2 meanings.

Redundancy

female sister

illegal murder

she killed him dead

One of the necessary meaning components/conditions is repeated.

Oxymoron: a combination of contradictory or incongruous words (Shakespeare) Legal murder

Propositional logic

Review:

•**Entailment.** One sentence is said to entail another sentence when the truth of the first *guarantees* the truth of the second and the falsity of the second *guarantees* the falsity of the first.

Presupposition

To presuppose is to **assume** something or to **take it for granted**.
It is considered a realm of **pragmatics**.

In current pragmatic discussions the following types of presuppositions are distinguished:

- Semantic**
- pragmatic**

1. Semantic presupposition

Natural language is used for communication in a context and every time a speaker uses a sentence, he/she is making certain assumptions about that context.

Speaker`s assumptions (beliefs) about the contexts
(Lakoff 1970)

[John realizes] that Jane is suitable for the job.

[John stopped] giving his advice.

In both sentences [the first clause] presupposes the truth of the second one (*Jane is suitable for the job* is presupposed to be true; *John is giving his advice* is presupposed to be true)

2. The pragmatic presupposition is the set of conditions that have to be satisfied in order for the speech act to be appropriate for the given circumstances, e.g. to be felicitous. (Keenan 1971)

John accused Harry of writing the letter.

Pragmatically presupposed:

here was something blameworthy about this particular letter.

Tu es degoutant.

Pragmatically presupposed:

The addressee is familiar to the speaker, socially inferior, a child etc.

Note:

The presupposed information is either contained in the sentence or **is a statement not even present in it!**

- There is a present king of France -
 - presupposition (F)
- Presupposition is part of the sentence:
- *The present king of France is bald.*-
 - presupposes the existence of a king of France.
 - (no truth value)
 - *The present king of France is not bald.*-
 - presupposes the existence of a king of France.
 - (no truth value)

Presupposition:

The falsity of the presupposed sentence causes the presupposing sentence not to have a truth value (truth value gap)

Types of truth

In philosophy:

A priori truth

A posteriori truth-empirically tested.

Necessary truth

Contingent truth (can be contradicted)

From a semantic point of view:

Analytic truth (depends on meaning relations within the sentence)

Synthetic truth.(depends on the facts of the world)

Analytically true/false sentences (they do not depend on reference or facts of the world):

- All horses are purple. *My horse is purple* (T)
- *John will either pass the exam or not.* T
- *If John is a bachelor, then he is unmarried.* T
- *Every person is sick, but some person is not sick.* F

Synthetically determined truth conditions:

All cars are red - F (if the universe of discourse is the whole town)

All cars are red - T (if there are just 3 red cars in the parking area)

Important difference between entailment and presupposition

If we negate an entailing sentence, then the **entailment fails**, but negating a presupposing sentence allows the **presupposition to survive**.

1. I did see my father today.
I did see somebody today. (entailment)
2. I did not see my father today.
I did see somebody today. (not an entailment)
3. The mayor of Ottawa is in City Hall today.
There is a mayor of Ottawa (presupposition)
4. The mayor of Ottawa isn't in City Hall today.
There is a mayor of Ottawa (presupposition)