Semantics

Part - III

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Synopsis

Part 1	Part 2	Part 3
Introduction to Semantics Its History	Synonymy	Collocation
Conceptions of Meaning Types of Meaning	Antonymy	Set
	Polysemy	Questions on Semantics
Sememe	Homonymy	

Collocation - Definition

Collocation is derived from Collocate which according to *The New International Webster's Comprehensive Dictionary of the English Language* means "to put in certain order; arrange together".

It originated from Latin *Collocatus* ' *come together'.*

Oxford Advanced Learner's Dictionary defines Collocation thus " combination of words in a language ,that happens very often and more frequently than would happen by chance."

The Dictionary further explains on its study page what is collocation with an apt example as follows.

What is Collocation?

◄ Collocation is the way in which particular words tend to occur or belong together. For example you can say

Meals will be served outside on the terrace, weather permitting.

but not Meals will be served outside on the terrace, weather allowing.

◄ Though both the sentences appear to give the same meaning (and the meal in any case will be served outside if the weather is good) because permit and allow convey similar meanings but in this combination only permitting is correct because it collocates with weather while allowing does not.(Study page B3)

Importance of Collocation

Learning collocation is an important part of learning the vocabulary of a language. As British Linguist R Firth observes, '"You shall know a word by the company it keeps."(qtd. in Crystal, 105)

Firth here was pointing out to the syntagmatic tendency of lexemes to work together, for example blond collocates with hair and neigh with horse,

Some common examples of collocations

Ink collocates with pen, paper, letter, blue, green, red, and so on.

Red collocates with roses, blood, ink, apple, tomato and so on. .

Sea collocates with breeze, coast, floor, rough, cruel, raging blue and so on.

Climb collocates with mountain, hill, tree, peak and so on.

Some More Types of Collocations

◄ Verbs +Prepositions – Add to, care for, arrive at

◄ Adjectives+ Prepositions – serious about, worried about

◄ Nouns +verbs- do a favour, have fun

◄ Adverbs + Adjectives – highly effective, highly successful

◄ Adjectives +nouns- best friend, bad habit, balanced diet

Salient Points about Collocation

i. Collocation refers to syntagmatic, horizontal relationship of lexical items

ii. Some collocations are easily predictable like *spick and span*.

iii. Some are less predictable, for example: *letter* collocates not only with *alphabet* and *spelling* but also with *box, post and write*.

iv. *Have* and *get* on the other hand haven't any predictable collocates.

v. Collocations are not association of ideas, for example, He was *green with envy* and not red or blue although there is nothing green about envy.

vi. Collocations vary with languages, for example In English *problems are faced* and *dreams are interpreted* but in Hebrew one has to *stand in front of problems* and *solve dreams*.

vii. Fixed collocations are considered as idioms, for example *rise and shine*.

viii. Collocations are different from links between ideas that are expressed orally, for example *mother* with *jam*.
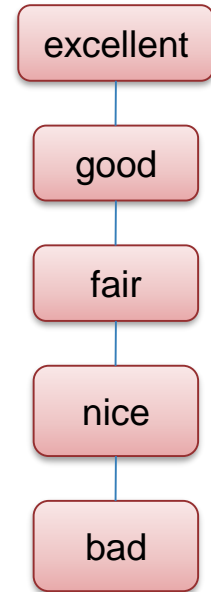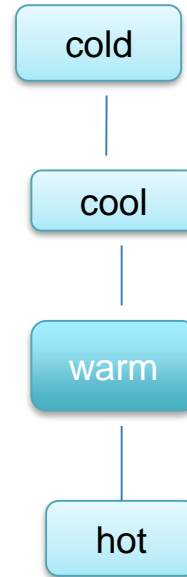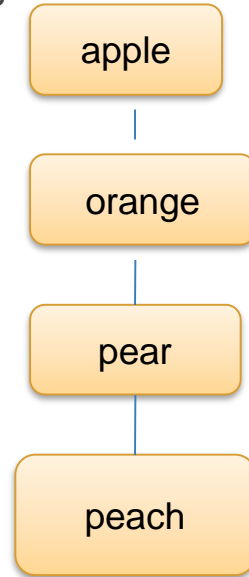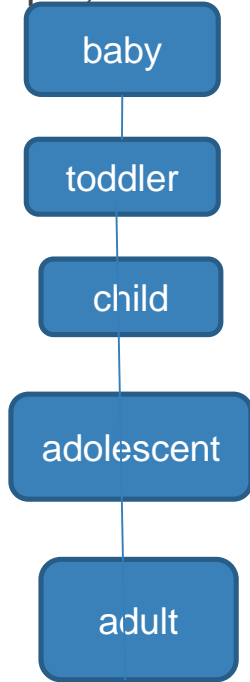
SET - Definition

The lexical Set can be defined as a grouping of words having approximately the same range of collocations, having the same contextual range and functioning in same situation types. But it refers to paradigmatic, vertical relationships of lexical items.

Note: Each item in set is defined by its place in relation to the other members of the set. Adolescent, for example, is the stage of growth between child and adult.

baby	apple	cold	excellent
toddler	orange	cool	good
child	pear	warm	fair
adolescent	peach	hot	nice
adult			bad

Salient Points about Set

◄ Semantic field is not divided into smooth field (as given in the previous table). The items of sets overlap often.

◄ The sets could be of content words (which refer to things, actions or events) like dog, ran, stairs or of structure words (which refer to function words) like a , the, down.

◄ Set of content words is an open set whereas that of function words is a closed set.

Collocation and Set

Serial number	Collocation	Set
1	It is outside grammar. Has no connection with the classes of words	Has closet analogy to grammar. It is a set of possible terms available under the same grammatical conditions.
2	It is syntagmatic, horizontal.	It is paradigmatic, vertical.
3	The choice is limited.	Choice is not limited

Conclusion

A knowledge of Collocation and Set helps in better understanding of the structure of vocabulary of a language and enhance language skills. This results in fluency and confidence in speaking.

Examination Questions

Pt Ravishankar Shukla University

Bastar University

Autonomous Colleges

Pt Ravishankar Shukla University, Raipur

◄ According to the question Paper pattern of PRSU for MA English Semester System is for regular students and Annual pattern for private students.

◄ In semester pattern question papers have four sections

◄ Section A – 20 Compulsory MCQ or Objective type questions (one word or one sentence answers) with no choice.

◄ Section B- 08 questions demanding very short answers with no choice.

◄ Section C - 08 questions demanding very short answers with no choice.

◄ Section D -04 questions demanding 150 words answers. It will have internal choice.

Note: So every topic including Semantics should be studied in depth. Don't do selective study.

You should be prepared to answer a topic say 'What is Semantics?' in one sentence, 50 words, 75 words and even 150 words.

Bastar University

◄ Bastar University follows the traditional pattern of PT Ravishankar Shukla university's old course.

◄ In the traditional pattern there is internal choice in each unit and each unit contains at least two questions.

◄ The questions demand long answers.

◄ But in Linguistics these questions may be in the form of writing short notes or difference between two topics. Four or five topics may be given and two or three to be attempted

Autonomous Colleges

◄ Most of the Autonomous Colleges of Chhattisgarh have their own pattern of question papers and marking scheme.

◄ There may be two or three sections demanding different kinds of answers.

◄ So if you are a student of an Autonomous College follow the pattern of your college.

Useful Tips to Score High Marks

◄ Read the whole course thoroughly.

◄ For every 5 marks write one page of the answer copy.

◄ Prepare your own notes consulting source books.

◄ Be conscious of Time Management.

◄ Memorize the answers and practice writing them keeping a watch in front of you.

◄ Be mentally prepare to tackle questions whose notes you haven't made. Prepare a mental map of such expected or representative questions.

Sample Questions on Semantics

What is Semantics?

Write in short about the scope and significance of Semantics.

What are the different conceptions of meaning?

- Define Sememe.

- Enumerate the types of meaning on the basis of sense relationships.

- Explain the semiotic triangle of Ogden and Richard.

- Write short notes on (i) Synonymy (ii) Antonymy (iii) Polysemy (iv) Homonymy

- Write an essay on Collocation and Set.

Note: Be mentally prepared to answer the above questions in short and in detail. Study the topics in detail so that you can answer objective type questions or MCQs on it. For this try to frame your own objective types on important points.

Select List of Books

Crystal, David*. The Cambridge Encyclopedia of Language.* 2nd edition. CUP

https://pediaa.com/difference-between-polysemy-and-homonymy/

Oxford Advanced Learner's Dictionary.

The New International Webster's Comprehensive Dictionary of the English Language . Trident Pres International, 2004.

Verma SK and N.Krishnaswamy. *Modern Linguistics: An Introduction.* Delhi: OUP, 1989.

Best of Luck