THE MAIN TENDENCIES OF SEMANTIC CHANGE

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Annotation: This article aims to reveal the views of the semantic features of the word expressed by English linguists and the causes and consequences of semantic change.

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Semantics deals with clarifying and studying of meaning of the word. Charles W. Kreidler defines the basic principles of semantics through paying attention to the English Language semantics. His research based on analyzinglanguages through words, parts of words and phrases. This approach demonstrates the relationships between words ,sentences, the essence of 'tone of voice' and 'body language' in face to - face decoding and encoding information , identifying the role of context in any conversation makes comparisons of features in other languages,investigating the outlook of addresser using language should be at least have similarities as to produce satisfactory communication between participants , discussing possible manner of language; the construction of text ;distinctive features between lexical and grammatical meaning,exploring relationships as synonymy, antonyms, and

hyponymy; ambiguity; implication; aspect; and modality a great deal of exercises, includes a glossary of terms.[1; *Charles W. Kreidler*, 2014]

Semantic change is the process of changing the form of language regards to the development of word usage can be seen more often in modern meaning is radically different from the original usage. In diachronic (or historical) linguistics, semantic change is a change in one of the meanings of a word. Connotations are words that have a various meaning and usage of each individual communication. Exploring of semantic change can be seen as part of etymology, onomasiology, semasiology, and semantics. For example: awful - originally meant "inspiring wonder (or fear)". Used originally as a shortening for "full of awe", in contemporary usage the word usually has negative meaning.

Changes in meaning can be seen in form as well . The second one may be internally or externally motivated. The equivalent to the paradigm in morphology is, in semantics, the word field in which words and their meanings stand in a network of relationships. Changing of meaning happens because of constantly   a result of using different intention for information is given between conversations and established in usage then a semantic change has occurred.There are different types of change which will be discussed presently.

Old English fæger which means that time as 'fit, suitable', Modern English fair came to mean 'pleasant, enjoyable' then 'beautiful' and 'pleasant in conduct', from which the second modern meaning 'just, impartial' derives. The first meaning continued to develop in the sense of 'of light complexion' and a third one arose from 'pleasant' in a somewhat pejorative sense, meaning 'average, mediocre', e.g. He only got a fair result in his exam.Gentle was borrowed in Middle English in the sense of 'born of a good-family, with a higher social standing'. Later the sense 'courteous' and then 'kind, mild in manners' developed because these qualities were regarded as qualities of the upper classes.

Lewd (Old English læwede) originally meant 'non-ecclesiastical, lay', then came to mean 'uneducated, unlearned' from which it developed into 'vulgar, lower-class' and then through 'bad-mannered, ignorant', to 'sexually insinuating'. Sophisticated meant 'unnatural, contaminated' but now has the sense of 'urbane, discriminating'. The word sophistry (from Old French sophistrie) still has its original meaning of 'specious, fallacious reasoning'. Artificial originally meant 'man-made, artful, skillfully constructed', compare artifice 'man-made construction'. But by comparison with 'natural' the word came to acquire a negative meaning because everything which is natural is regarded positively.

Nice (Latin nescius 'not knowing') is recorded from the 13th century in the sense of 'foolish', then it shifted to 'coy, shy' and by the 16th century had the meaning 'fastidious, dainty, subtle' from which by the 18th century the sense 'agreeable, delightful' developed.

Silly (Old English sēlig 'happy, fortuitous') had by the 15th century the sense of 'deserving of pity' and then developed to 'ignorant, feeble-minded' and later 'foolish'.

Fast (OE fæste 'firm') later developed the meaning 'quick'. The original sense is still seen in steadfast 'firm in position'.

The following graphs show two further cases of semantic shift in which the increase in the scope of one word is paralleled by the reduction in scope of a related word. [2; *Stockwell Robert and Donka Minkova, 2001*]

Semantic differentiation. The above cases are all cases of semantic shift, the original meaning is not available anymore, or only in an opaque compound. The process whereby two meanings arise from a single original one is termed semantic differentiation. The following instance illustrates the phenomenon.

In English there has been considerable fluctuation in the preterite and past participle ending after sonorants for weak verbs: either a voiced /-d/ or a voiceless /-t/. This has resulted in the exploitation of the two options for semantic purposes. The

situation for most varieties of English today is that the ending -ed stresses the process of the verb and the ending -t emphasises the result as seen in the following examples.

Polysemous words. These are words which have a basic and a related figurative meaning, e.g. foot and foot of the mountain. Characteristic for the figurative meaning is that it occurs in a phrase in which its metaphorical use is clear. But with time the secondary use may occur without any specifying information. This is the first step towards a shift from basic to figurative meaning as the unmarked member of a pair. For instance decimate formerly meant to reduce to one tenth in size (from Latin decem) but now the secondary meaning 'to waste, destroy' has become the primary meaning and the original basic one is lost. An example of a word which has both meanings in equilibrium would be headache which means both 'pain in the head' and 'unwanted problem'.

The words for 'man'. In Old English there were at least three words for 'man': guma, wer and mann. Only the last of these survived into Modern English. Guma 'man' was lost in the course of Middle English. It was formerly an independent noun and also occurred in compounds. One of these was brydguma which consisted of the words for 'bride' and 'man'. With the loss of the independent form guma, it was reinterpreted in this compound as being groom, a form which still existed in English for instance with the meaning 'someone who looks after, minds horses'. The second word wer disappeared unobtrusively and is today only found in the compound werewolf 'man-wolf'. [3; Hughes Geoffrey 2000]

Means for extending word stock as the lexicon of a language is an open class it is constantly expanding. The direct goal is gaining words for new phenomena, concepts, etc. in the society which uses the language in question. The side-effect is an increase in the size of the lexicon. There are various means of extending a language's word stock which can be broken down into two basic groups. The first creates compounds out of material from the language itself and the second resorts to borrowing material, integrating it into the system (phonology, morphology, semantics) of the language as it does so.

Note that the cases of semantically differentiated loans in German show that the broadest general meaning is retained for the native word (e.g. Sakko, Blazer, Blouson but the widest meaning is shown by Jacke). Now this is not always so. For instance the Scandinavian loans in English show a situation where the native English word is later the more restricted in meaning, e.g. die (from Scandinavian) and steorfan (Modern English starve) which was narrowed semantically to 'die of hunger'. Here a comparison with the later French loans is illuminating. These do not usually replace the native English words but complement them by being located on a higher register, i.e. they are stylistically more elevated. Hence the word decease means 'die' but is used in a more solemn or ceremonious context much as German uses versterben. [4; *Harley Heidi, 2003*]

Types of semantic change the simplest type of semantic change is a shift. For instance the Latin verb arriver derives ultimately from ad ripam 'at the shore' but has long lost this meaning. But even such an innocuous case can be classified. A closer look at all changes in meaning shows that alterations in meaning can be classified according to type. There are four basic types of semantic change which on the one hand refer to the range of a word's meaning and on the other, to the way the meaning is evaluated by speakers.

1) Semantic expansion

Here a word increases its range of meaning over time. For instance in Middle English bridde was a term for 'small bird', later the term bird came to be used in a general sense and the word fowl, formally the more general word was restricted to the sense of 'farmyard birds bred especially for consumption', cf. German 'Geflügel'. Another case is horn 'bone-like protrusion on the heads of certain animals', then 'musical instrument', then 'drinking vessel' of similar shape. The instance of arrivare just quoted belongs to this category.

2) Semantic restriction

This is the opposite to expansion. Already to be seen with fowl but also with many other words, such as meat which derives from Middle English mete with the

general meaning of 'food' and now restricted to processed animal flesh. In turn the word flesh was narrowed in its range to 'human flesh'

Borrowing from another language may be involved here. For instance Old English sniþan (German schneiden) was replaced by Old Norse cut as the general term and the second Old English word ceorfan was restricted in meaning to 'carve'.

3) Semantic deterioration

A disapprovement in the meaning of a word. The term knave meant originally (Old English) 'male servant' from 'boy' (cf. German Knabe) but deteriorated to the meaning of 'base or coarse person', having more or less died out and been replaced by boy. Villain developed from 'inhabitant of a village' to 'scoundrel'. The word peasant is used now for someone who shows bad behaviour as the word farmer has become the normal term. In official contexts, however, the term 'peasant' is found for small and/or poor farmers.

4)An improvement in the meaning of a word. The term nice derives from Latin nescius 'ignorant' and came at the time of its borrowing from Old French to mean 'silly, simple' then 'foolish, stupid', later developing a more positive meaning as 'pleasing, agreeable'.

Current semantic change. Present-day English shows quite a number of semantic changes which consist of expansions, restrictions, ameliorations and deteriorations. To start with one can quote an unusual semantic development with the word sanction which has come to have two opposite meanings. It can mean 'to allow something' as in They sanctioned the proposal or 'to forbid something' especially in the nominalised form as in Britain imposed sanctions on the country.

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