Annotation Guidelines for Diachronic Usage Relatedness

January 10, 2018

Introduction. Your task is to rate the semantic relatedness between two uses of a word. For instance, presented with a sentence pair as in (1), you are asked to rate the semantic relatedness between the two uses of *umwälzen* in (1a) and (1b).

- (1) a. Kinadon wollte den Staat **umwälzen**.
 - b. Ich muß mich **umwälzen** und kann keinen Schlaf in meine Augen bringen.

Task structure. You are provided an ODS table document as shown in Table 1. One row in the table corresponds to one target sentence pair. For each such row, the columns provide a 'target sentence 1' and a 'target sentence 2', illustrating the two uses of the same word and their contexts. The target word is marked in bold font in both contexts. Your task is to rate, for these pairs of target sentences, how related in meaning the two uses of the target word in the two target sentences are.

Since language is often ambiguous, please read each sentence separately first, and decide upon the most plausible meaning of the target word in each sentence BEFORE comparing the two uses. In some cases, the target sentences provide sufficient information to understand the meanings of the target word; for more unclear cases, additional context is provided in gray.



Table 1: Annotation Table.

The judgment scale. The scale that you will be using for your judgments ranges from 1 (the two uses of the word have completely unrelated meanings) to 4 (the two uses of the word have identical meanings). This four-point scale is shown in detail in Table 2.

4: Identical

3: Closely Related

2: Distantly Related

1: Unrelated

0: Cannot decide

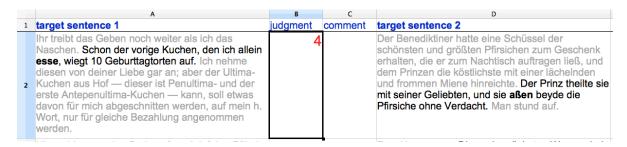
Table 2: Four-point Scale of Relatedness.

Please try to ignore differences between the uses that do not impact their meaning. For example, *isst* and *a\beta* can express the same meaning, even though one is in present tense, and the other is in past tense. Also, distinctions between singular and plural (as in *Karotte* vs. *Karotten*) are typically irrelevant for the meanings.

Note that there are no right or wrong answers in this task, so please provide your subjective opinion. However, please try to be consistent in your judgments.

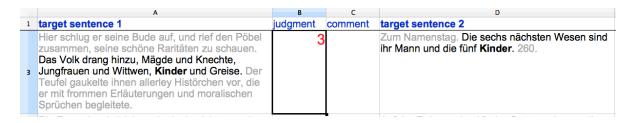
Annotation examples. We now zoom into the individual rows from Table 1 and provide rating examples, in order to illustrate the different degrees of relatedness that you may find in the judgment task. Note again that these are just examples and you should always provide your own subjective opinion.

The two instances of *essen* in Example A are judged identical in meaning (rating: 4), because both uses refer to the physical act of consuming food.



Example A: rating 4 (Identical).

In contrast, the two uses of *Kind* in Example B are judged closely related but not identical (rating: 3), because the meaning of *Kind(er)* in target sentence 1 may be paraphrased as 'young person', while the meaning in target sentence 2 is closer to 'offspring'.



Example B: rating 3 (Closely Related).

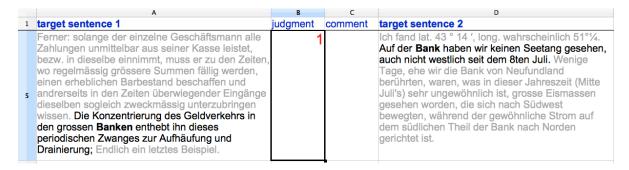
In Example C, the two uses of the word *Scheideweg* are related, but more distantly (rating: 2): Unlike the *Kinder* example above, the two uses of *Scheideweg* in this example have different meanings, which are yet related by a figurative similarity, on the level that both involve some kind of decision.

A rating of 1 is used for two uses of a word that are completely unrelated in their meaning, as it is the case for *Bank* in Example D. Note that this pair of uses is semantically more distant than the two uses of *Scheideweg* above. River banks and financial banks are not semantically related to each other.

Finally, there is also the option for you to provide the judgment 'Cannot decide' (rating: 0). Please use this rating only if absolutely necessary, when you are unable to make a decision as to the degree of relatedness in meaning between the two bold words. Please provide a comment for why you cannot decide about this pair of uses.



Example C: rating 2 (Distantly Related).



Example D: rating 1 (Unrelated).

Historical language data. The sentences provided for the annotation task were gathered from the historical corpus of *Deutsches Textarchiv (erweitert)*. In total, there are 1320 sentence pairs. Target sentences may occur more than once in the table.

As language changes over time, words might be used differently from what you are familiar with. If you are unsure about the meaning of a word or construction in a sentence, try to infer it from the meaning of the context.

The sentences may be very short or very long and some may seem ungrammatical. Also, words may be spelled in a different way than you are used to. We tried to reduce the difficulty to read the sentences by normalizing special characters to modern orthography.

Try to ignore these issues; focus only on the meaning of the target words in their contexts. If you find that a sentence is too flawed to understand it, or the use of the target word is ambiguous, or the two instances of the target word do not match (i.e., they do not have the same lemma), please provide a comment to this effect.

¹http://www.deutschestextarchiv.de/

Progressing through the task. While annotating the sentence pairs, you can always go back to previous judgments and change them, if you change your mind when new material is coming up. Also, you do not have to annotate the whole file in one session. If you wish to leave a comment at any point during the task, please type it into the comment field.

You may also want to turn off the spell checker to not be disturbed by additional highlighting.

Finishing the task. Please make sure that you do not change anything in the file apart from column width, font size, your judgments and comments. Return the annotated document to e-mail. If you have any further questions on the task, do not hesitate to ask.