

Introduction

Words as the Basic Conceptual Unit for Language

Words: The fundamental building block of languages from the perspective of language users.

The Unit



Lexicology
(the Word)



Morphology
(the Morpheme)



Phonology
(the Phoneme)



Phonetics
(the Phone)



Syntax
(the Sentence)



Semantics
(the Proposition)

Icons: University of Waterloo

Symbolicity of Words

cat [k^hæt]
chat [ʃæt]
gato [gæto]

Signifier



Signified

Cat: wenchiawang/iStock/Thinkstock

Symbolicity of Words

Based on convention
Arbitrariness - Motivation



Arbitrary
• Colour
• Words
 Coffee
 Starbucks

Motivation
• Central image
• Stars



Arbitrary
Words
Consumer
Whore

Motivation
Dollar signs

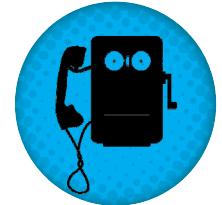
Starbucks Logo: Starbucks; Consumer Whore: Kieron Dwyer

Symbolicity of Words

Dialing a phone.

Hanging up the phone.

The **ring** of the phone.



leg

leg

Cellphone, Phone, Table: wenchiaiwang/iStock/Thinkstock; Rotary Phones: seamartini/iStock/Thinkstock; Crank Phone: University of Waterloo; Woman: Kharlamova/iStock/Thinkstock; Hand: Noedelhap/iStock/Thinkstock

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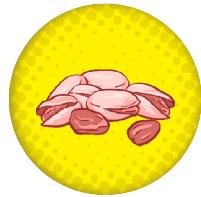
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Folk Etymologies



"pink-stachios"



"bridegroom"

bryd-guma
(‘bride-man’)



"high muck-a-muck"
(or muckety-muck)

Chinook Jargon
hayo makamak
(‘one who has plenty
to eat’)

Girl: Kharlamova/iStock/Thinkstock; Pistachios: Utro_na_more/iStock/Thinkstock; Groom: mocoo/iStock/Thinkstock; Dinner: krolone/iStock/Thinkstock

Folk Etymologies

Backformation ← no agentive

pease → pea + s → pea

editor → edit + or → edit

swindler → swindle + er → swindle

Legitimate agentive

farm → farmer

} Specific re-analysis
into component morphemes



Pease: mocoo/iStock/Thinkstock; Farmer: wenchiawang/iStock/Thinkstock

Folk Etymologies

Re-analysis



pistachio → pink-stachio



écrevisse → crayfish



musquash → muskrat

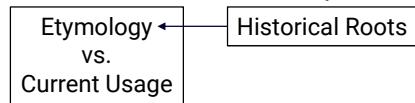


berfry → belfry

Pistachios: Utro_na_more/iStock/Thinkstock; Crayfish: bor-zebra/iStock/Thinkstock; Muskrat: coffee-in/iStock/Getty Images; Belfry: Educester/iStock/Thinkstock

Historical Analysis

Analysis



← crayfish

Crayfish: bor-zebra/iStock/Thinkstock

Wrap-up

"Arbitrary", conventional linkages

Motivations atrophied



Pease: mocoo/iStock/Thinkstock; Pistachios: Utro_na_more/iStock/Thinkstock; Crayfish: bor-zebra/iStock/Thinkstock

Generating Words

Background: Elemental Linguistic Components and Lexicalization

The Candidates

- A noise deployed in the language
[p^h] (Phones)
- A set of noises deployed systematically in a certain way
/p/ (Phoneme)
- {-able} (Affixes)
- **Words**
Opposable

Words are the elemental building blocks from the perspective of language users.

Lexicalization



Bird-like-machine-shaped-concave-instrument-for-eating-with

English → airplane spoon

French → cuillère en forme d'avion

German → flugzeuglöffel

Plane/Spoon: wenchiawang/iStock/Thinkstock; Hand: Noedelhap/iStock/Thinkstock

Word Building Processes



English → airplane spoon

French → cuillère en forme d'avion

German → flugzeuglöffel

Where do words come from?

- Simplex (i.e., word, chair, dog)

No processes visible

Complex

- Morphologically (i.e., doggy)
(tune in later)
- Compounding (i.e., armchair)
- Conversion (i.e., butter as noun,
butter as verb)
- Clipping (i.e., burger)
- Blending (i.e., smog)
- Folk etymologies (i.e., crayfish)

Plane/Spoon: wenchiawang/iStock/Thinkstock; Hand: Noedelhap/iStock/Thinkstock

Compounds

Can occur orthographically as:

No orthographical indication

- wet suit

Glued together

- greenhouse
- blackboard

Hyphenated

- child-proof
- father-in-law

The semantic test

Does it mean something different from its component parts?

The phonetic test

Is it stressed like a single word or multiple words?

Compounds



wet suit



wetsuit

Scuba Diver: painterr/iStock/Thinkstock; Suit/Cloud: mocoo/iStock/Thinkstock; Hand: Noedelhap/iStock/Thinkstock

Compounds



greenhouse



green house

Greenhouse: Dorling Kindersley/iStock/Thinkstock; House: wenchiawang/iStock/Thinkstock; Hand: Noedelhap/iStock/Thinkstock

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semantic test

phonetic test

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Hand: Noedelhap/iStock/Thinkstock

Conversion (Double-dipping)

One word phonologically functioning in at least two ways.

Word
Meaning 1
Meaning 2
Meaning 3
.
.
.

Look at the context

butter dirty ship empty

toast clean nail paint

butter (as noun) butter (as verb)

"He put butter on the toast." "He buttered the toast."

NOT "~~There was buttered on the table.~~"

Stress patterns

Verb Noun

- permít
 - contést
 - survéy
- pérmít
 - cóntest
 - súrvey

Hand: Noedelhap/iStock/Thinkstock

Clipping

The form of the word shrinks

professor	→ prof
hamburger	→ burger
demonstration	→ demo
submarine	→ sub
delicatessen	→ deli
electronic mail	→ e-mail
World Wide Web	→ web
Internet	→ net

Current-usage comparison with parallel terms

- Longer
- Phonologically and conceptually similar

Historical comparison

- Longer
- Phonologically and conceptually similar

Acronyms/Abbreviations

	Pronounceable	Letter-enunciation	
acronyms	{ Radar Scuba Snafu Fubar	CBC U.S.A. WWW PR	}
			abbreviations

Jargon, Argot, Slang

Related to clipping, in terms of efficiency,
but users have to be in, and others are therefore out.

Blends

smoke/fog	→ smog
motor hotel	→ motel
aerobic exercise	→ aerobicize
breakfast/lunch	→ brunch
information/entertainment	→ infotainment
education/entertainment	→ edutainment
Northern Telecom	→ NorTel

Current-usage comparison with parallel terms

- Multiple words
- Phonologically and conceptually similar

Historical comparison

- Multiple words
- Phonologically and conceptually similar

Formal and Conceptual Processes for Creating Words

Word Creation Examples



Uninstalled

Being fired

Decruitment

(see uninstalled)

Cube farm

An office filled with cubicles

Prairie Dogging

When someone yells or drops something loudly in a cube farm, and people's heads pop up over the walls to see what's going on

artisticco/iStock/Thinkstock

Word Creation Examples



Seagull manager

A manager who flies in, making a lot of noise, craps on everything and then leaves

Mouse potato

The on-line, wired generation's answer to the couch potato

Alpha geek

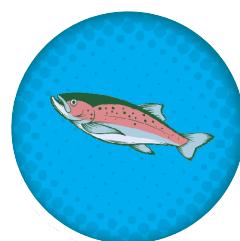
The most knowledgeable, technically proficient person in an office or work group

Assmosis

The process by which some people seem to absorb success and advancement by kissing up to the boss rather than working hard

wenchiawang/iStock/Thinkstock

Word Creation Examples



Salmon day

The experience of spending an entire day swimming upstream only to be screwed and die in the end

Adminisphere

The rarefied organizational layers beginning just above the rank and file. Decisions that fall from the adminisphere are often profoundly inappropriate or irrelevant to the problems they were designed to solve

404

Someone who's clueless

Generica

Features of the North American landscape that are exactly the same no matter where one is, such as fast food joints, strip malls, subdivisions

amplionus/iStock/Thinkstock

Word Creation Examples



Percussive maintenance

The fine art of whacking the living shit out of an electronic device to get it to work again

Yuppie food stamps

The ubiquitous \$20 bills spewed by ATMs everywhere. Often used when trying to split the bill after a meal

CLM

Career Limiting Move, like doing an uncannily accurate imitation of your boss while she is standing right behind you

Ohnosecond

That minuscule fraction of time in which you realize that you've just made a big mistake

wenchiawang/iStock/Thinkstock

Formal Processes (Semasiological)

Morphology

- uninstalled
 - decruitment
- (morphology + blending)

Blend

- assmosis
- adminisphere
- generica

Conversion

- prairie dogging
- 404

Abbreviation

CLM

Compounding

- salmon day
- cube farm
- seagull manager
- onosecond
- mouse potato
- alpha geek

Nada

- Yuppie food stamps
- Percussive maintenance

} *Onomasiological*

Conceptual Processes (Onomasiological)

Metaphor

- yuppie food stamps
- 404
- uninstalled
- salmon day
- prairie dogging
- alpha geek
- cube farm
- seagull manager
- mouse potato
- percussive maintenance

Metonymy

- ohnosecond
- mouse potato
- cube farm

Metaplasim

- assmosis
- decruitment
- generica
- adminisphere

Nada

CLM

Onomasiological / Semasiological Modes of Word Analysis

Introduction

Semasiology

Signifier

dog

Word form

- polysemy
- homophony

Onomasiology

Signified

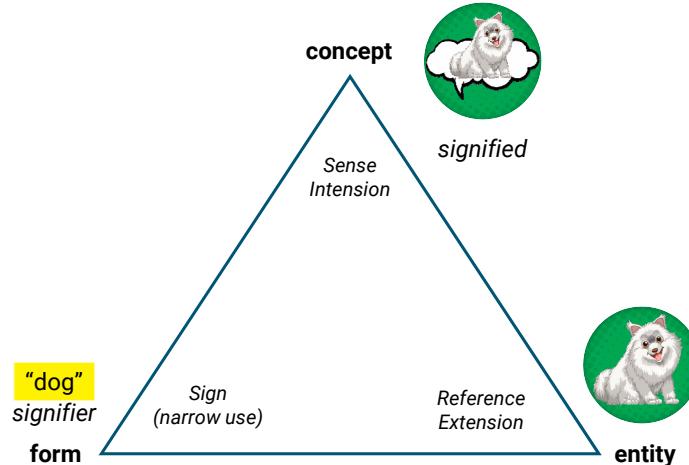


Concept evoked

- synonymy
- antonymy

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Semiotic Triangle



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Synonymy (Onomasiology)



- Concept (**signified**) stays the same.
- Corresponding forms (**signifiers**) vary.

There's really no such thing as absolute synonymy.

Lawyer
Attorney
Barrister
Solicitor
Shyster
Ambulance-chaser

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Onomasiology Answer



Ambulance-chaser

Ambulance-chaser is:

- A) metaphor
- B) metonymy
- C) metaplasms
- D) all of the above
- E) none of the above

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Semasiology Answer



Ambulance-chaser

Ambulance-chaser is:

- A) blend
- B) clipping
- C) morphological
- D) compounding
- E) conversion

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Antonymy (Onomasiology)

- up/down
- black/white } experiential
- boy/girl
- stop/go } cultural
- cat/dog
- student/professor

- Antonyms are two words that are very similar in meaning, but diverge on one crucial semantic feature
- Some antonyms are experiential: they are grounded in our common experience of the world
- Others are culturally derived



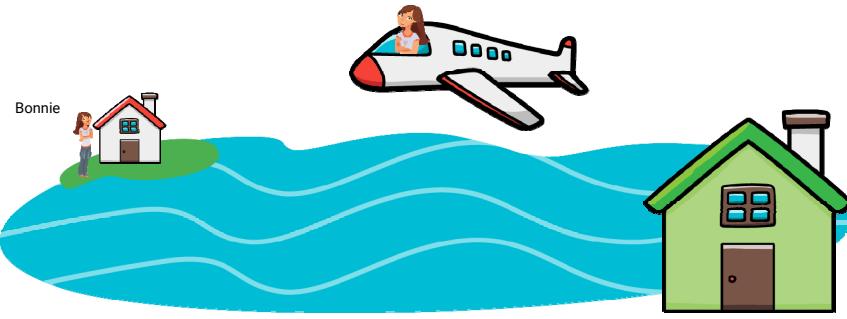
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Homophony (Semasiology)

Lies

- That's where she lives; "lies" = "lives".
- Don't believe her on a transatlantic flight; "lies" = "tells fibs"

"My bonnie **lies** over the ocean"



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Homophony (Semasiology)

Two (or more) words (therefore, two or more meanings) that happen to sound the same; a product of coincidence.

- Bear as in ursidae.
- Bare as in naked.
- Bear as in carry.



Different spelling is a good indication of homophony.

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Polysemy (Semasiology)

Polysemy vs. Homophony

Polysemy	vs.	Homophony
One word		Two (or more) words that happen to sound the same
A group of related meanings		Product of coincidence

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Polysemy (Semasiology)

Bear

Tolerate: *I can't bear his jokes.*

Give testimony: *I bear witness.*

Have as an identification: *We bear the same name.*

Give birth: *She can bear children.*

Produce as yield: *It has been known to bear fruit.*

Support the weight: *That pillar bears the weight of the whole first floor.*

Maintain: *They bear me a grudge.*



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Polysemy (Semasiology)

Lies

- Is supine
- Dwells

The place where one is habitually supine.



Polysemy

- One word
- A group of related meanings
- The default case in language

Language is highly polysemous



Amplionus/iStock/Thinkstock

Polysemy (Semasiology)

Over

- My Bonnie lies **over** the ocean. (lies = fibs)
 - My Bonnie lies **over** the ocean.
 - My Bonnie lies **over** the couch.
 - My Bonnie sails **over** the ocean.
 - My Bonnie jumps **over** the couch.
 - My Bonnie talks **over** the problem.
 - My Bonnie talks **over** the phone.
 - My Bonnie and I, we are **over**.
 - My Bonnie and I, we are **over** the flu.

x is over y ← prototype



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x is over y = x is on the other side of y



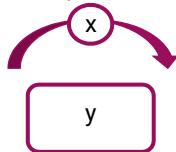
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x goes over y ← passage above



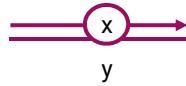
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x goes over y ← passage on top



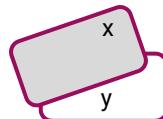
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x is (all) over y = x is covering lots of y



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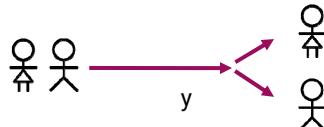
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We are over ← our relationship



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Conceptual Metaphor

Time is money

- **spent** a month
 - **invested** hours
 - **cost** me the weekend
- Relationships are journeys
- "we've only just **begun**..."

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I am over the flu = the flu is over



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Polysemy

- One word
- A group of related meanings
- The default case in language

Language is highly polysemous

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A Radial Network: The Polysemy of Over

there is a line directly above x which leads from me to y.

x covers y.

x stands in relation to y like it was covering y.

x has done something which is like travelling a path directly above y.

x travels directly above y.

x has travelled a path directly above y.

x has travelled a path directly above y. The journey is complete.

x is a relationship. relationships are like journeys. x is complete.

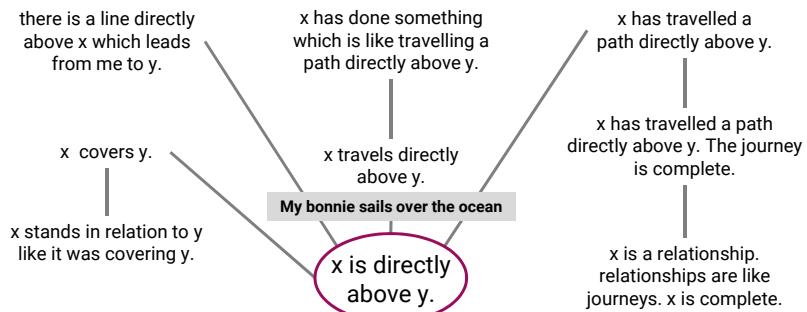
My bonnie is over the table

x

y

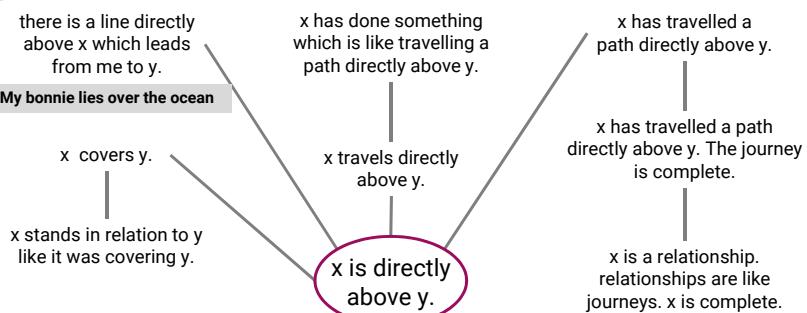
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A Radial Network: The Polysemy of Over



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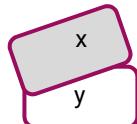
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Amplionus/iStock/Thinkstock

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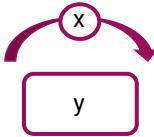
x travels directly above y.

x covers y.

x stands in relation to y like it was covering y.

My Bonnie flew over St. Louis

x is directly above y.



Amplionus/iStock/Thinkstock

A Radial Network: The Polysemy of Over

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My Bonnie and I got here over Route 66

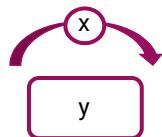
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x is directly above y.



Amplionus/iStock/Thinkstock

A Radial Network: The Polysemy of Over

there is a line directly above x which leads from me to y.

x has done something which is like travelling a path directly above y.

My Bonnie talked over the phone

x has travelled a path directly above y.

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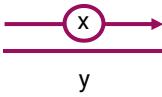
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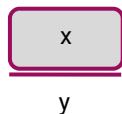
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x covers y.

My Bonnie talked over the problem

x is directly above y.



Amplionus/iStock/Thinkstock

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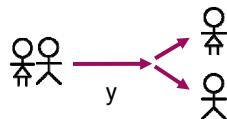
x is a relationship. relationships are like journeys. x is complete.

x travels directly above y.

x stands in relation to y like it was covering y.

x covers y.

x is directly above y.



Alas, My Bonnie and I, it is over between us

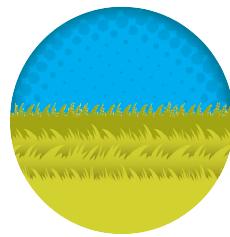
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Question 1 Answer

Grass:

- on a lawn
- in a pipe

- A) homophony
 B) polysemy



You answered this correctly!

Amplionus/iStock/Thinkstock

Question 2 Answer

Leech:

- in a swamp
- In a social group

- A) homophony
 B) polysemy



You answered this correctly!

Amplionus/iStock/Thinkstock

Question 3 Answer

Range:

- of mountains
- cooking

- A) homophony
- B) polysemy



You answered this correctly!

Amplionus/iStock/Thinkstock

Question 4 Answer

Key:

- for locks
- for assignments

- A) homophony
- B) polysemy



You answered this correctly!

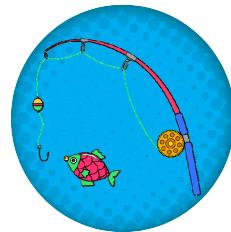
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Question 5 Answer

[rijl]:

- for fishing (reel)
- authentic (real)

- A) homophony
 B) polysemy



You answered this correctly!

Amplionus/iStock/Thinkstock

Question 6 Answer

Race:

- competition
- type of people

- A) homophony
 B) polysemy



You answered this correctly!

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Grammatical Categories

Analyzing Words with Respect to How they Function

Semasiological

- Shape
- Sound
- Spelling

Onomasiological

- Meaning
- Concepts

Grammatical

- How the words function
- Lexical/class categories

Tests

Semantic

What concepts and entities does the category evoke?

Morphological

Which affixes (if any) are legitimate?

Syntactic

Which other words does it co-occur with, and in what order?

Word Classes

dog

cat

the

a

Content words

Carry the semantic burden;
less important syntactically.

Open class

Nouns, Verbs, Adjectives,
Adverbs

Function words

Do much of the syntactic work;
relatively lightweight semantically.

Closed class

Prepositions, determiners,
particles, qualifiers, degree words,
pronouns, etc.

English Nouns

Semantic

Person, place,
or thing



cats

Morphological

Takes plural and
possessive suffixes



milks

↑
illegitimate plural

Syntactic

Follows articles and
adjectives, in that order



A frog

The frog

~~Big a frog~~

~~Green the frog~~

Cats: cole matt/IStock/Thinkstock; Milking Cow: blueringmedia/Getty Images; Frog/Milk: wenchiawang/IStock/Thinkstock

English Verbs

Semantic	Morphological	Syntactic
An action or state	Takes plural and possessive suffixes	Can follow an auxiliary verb
	nod	He can nod his head.
	nod	She will know that he is looking for his puppy.
	(has, had) nodded (past participle)	
	(is, was) nodding (present participle)	
	swim	
	swam	
	swum	

English Adjectives

Semantic	Morphological	Syntactic
A quality, attribute, or property (of a person, place or thing)	Takes comparative and superlative suffixes	Precedes nouns, follows degree word
	loud	The loud ringmaster.
	louder	The very loud ringmaster.
	loudest	

English Adverbs

Semantic	Morphological	Syntactic
Modifies an action or state	Nothing	Follows a verb
Manner	(Though many of them end in -ly)	They run quickly.
Time		Yesterday we went to the park.
Location		They nod vigorously.
	quickly	
	quick	
	quicker	
	quickest	
	very quick	
		adjectives

Review

Review

- Linguistic building blocks
- Lexicalization
- Semasiology
- Onomasiology
- Word formation
 - Semasiological
Morphology, Compounding, Conversion,
Clipping, Blending, Folk etymologies
 - Onomasiological
Metaphor, Metonymy, Metaplasms



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Clock: wenchiaiwang/IStock/Thinkstock