

# Semantics: Tutorial Two

Francis Bond <bond@ieee.org>

1. Find a pair of absolute synonyms in a language that you speak.
2. Decide if the words in the following sets are absolute or near synonyms. How do you decide? What type of criteria have you used?

(1) *tell, say, talk*

(2) *sad, unhappy*

3. Classify the following pairs of opposites

(3) *temporary/permanent*                      (8) *advance/retreat*

(4) *red/green*                                      (9) *buyer/seller*

(5) *strong/weak*                                  (10) *clean/dirty*

(6) *open/shut*                                    (11) *present/absent*

(7) *monarch/subject*                          (12) *yesterday/today*

4. Classify the following related words

(13) *begin/start*                                  (19) *palette/painting*

(14) *class/education*                            (20) *segment/orange*

(15) *slice/pie*                                    (21) *scalpel/surgery*

(16) *sand/grain*                                  (22) *vehicle/bicycle*

(17) *tree/forest*                                (23) *smart/intelligent*

(18) *bee/swarm*

5. Below are some nouns ending in *-er* and *-or*. Using your intuition about their meanings, discuss their status as agentive nouns. In particular, are they derivable by regular rule or would they need to be listed in the lexicon?

*teacher, author, blazer, blinker, choker, loser, debtor,  
loner, mentor, reactor, roller, lecturer*

Check your decisions against a dictionary's entries.

If there is more time, try to come up with your own examples of the different meaning alternations.

**Acknowledgments** Some of these questions are partially based on exercises from Saeed (2003, ch3)