

# Meaning 1

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# What is meaning?

- ▶ The notion of meaning in linguistics concerns that which is expressed by sentences, utterances and their components.
- ▶ MEANING IS = The content conveyed in communication by language, the message or thought in the mind of the speaker that is encoded in language and sent to a hearer who decodes it.

# What is meaning?

- ▶ **Reference and sense**
- ▶ “My computer crashed”
- ▶ The NP “my computer” refers to this artefact and the relationship between both is called **reference**.
- ▶ Nevertheless this relationship goes further than that, also establishing relationships between a NP and an imaginary or intangible thing.

# What is meaning?



- ▶ **Reference and sense**

- ▶ Reference is different from “meaning”. For example words like “hello”, “eh”, “in” or “and” cannot be used to refer to anything at all.

- ▶ HOWEVER, this does not mean they are meaningless.

- ▶ SIGNS always have **sense** though some are never used in reference

- ▶ The Morning star
- ▶ The evening star

→ They both refer to the same thing (Venus) but they have different meanings (**SENSE**)

# What is meaning?

## ▶ Reference and sense

- ▶ The sense of a linguistic sign derives in part from its relation with other signs
- ▶ In Indonesian they only have one term corresponding to the words in English “hand” and “arm”.
- ▶ Further examples: French (Singular and plural for nouns) VS Sanskrit (Singular, dual and plural for nouns).
- ▶ This aspect of sense – as the aspect derived from the contrast with other member of the language system is called **VALUE**.

# What is meaning?

- ▶ BUT within the sense there is also another aspect apart from value.
- ▶ **INTENSION** – defining properties included with a linguistic item
- ▶ Ex: In “Sheep” , we will also include properties such as “animal”, “mammal” “ruminant” “has hooves”.
- ▶ What would be the intension of the words “plant”, “car” or “flat”?

# What is meaning?

- ▶ **Sense and connotations**
- ▶ In words we many times find **CONNOTATIONS**: unstable meaning association
- ▶ Ex: Mathematical
- ▶ It really depends on the context, and we may have different connotations for the same Word
- ▶ Connotations are not always present

# What is meaning?

- ▶ Look up the connotations of these words.
- ▶ Childish / Childlike / Youthful
- ▶ “He’s such a *dog*.”
- ▶ “That woman is a *dove* at heart.”
- ▶ “There’s no place like *home*.”
- ▶ “What do you expect from a *politician*?”
- ▶ “That woman is so *pushy*!”
- ▶ “My *mom and dad* worked hard to put me through college.”



# What is meaning?

- ▶ **Sense and connotations**
- ▶ Connotation can be very relevant in language acquisition and change
- ▶ A connotation can be so attached to a word can actually change its sense, replacing an earlier one.
- ▶ Example: “Sick”

# What is meaning?

- ▶ **Literal and figurative maning**
- ▶ We do not always use an expression in its literal sense
- ▶ We already talk about the expression “he kicked the bucket”
- ▶ Clearly here we find a literal and a non-literal or figurative meaning

# What is meaning?

- ▶ **Literal and figurative maning**
- ▶ The figurative meaning can be considered to be an extension of the literal meaning. Relevant processes of meaning extension are:
  - ▶ **Metaphor**
  - ▶ **Metonymy**
  - ▶ **Synecdoche**

# What is meaning?

- ▶ Metaphor – The senses of an expression is extended to another concept on the basis of resemblance.
- ▶ Ex: Moroccan drivers are cowboys.
- ▶ Metonymy and synecdoche
- ▶ He's fond of the bottle; London needs to take part in the brexit; My new wheels are extraordinary; (At hospital) The kidney had hard time last night.
- ▶ Find 5 examples of metonymy and synecdoche