

Semantic Extension and Re-duplication in Speeches of Final Year Students of the Department of English Akwa Ibom State University, Obio Akpa Campus

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ABSTRACT

This work studied the aspects of semantic extension and re-duplication in speeches of selected students of English Department, Akwa Ibom State University, Obio Akpa Campus. The objective is to identify some long-observed use of Semantic extensions and re-duplication in the student's use of English. The instrument in collecting data was observation with voice recording from thirty final year students. The study adopts Halliday's Systemic Functional Grammar Theory as a framework for analyzing the descriptive use of language without following the traditional grammar model which was Prescriptive. The findings revealed that semantic extensions and reduplication are mostly used by the speakers to express themselves and show flexibility of the English Language. Though semantic extension and re-duplication can be used in speech intentionally and unintentionally, where the speaker does not know that the words used express the same meaning. It concludes that semantic extension of meaning of a word or sentence occurs to shift away from the dictionary meaning and the repetition of words to create emphasis or to prove a point in a conversation without changes the original intention of the speakers.

Keywords: *Systemic functional grammar, semantic extensions, re-duplication, conversation.*

INTRODUCTION

The term, Semantics is a technical term which refers to the branch of linguistics which deals with the study of meaning. It is concerned with the meanings of words, phrases, sentences, and larger units of discourse, as well as the relationships between them. Semantics is an important aspect of linguistics, as it helps us understand how people use language to convey meaning and communicate with one another (Udofot and

Edem, 2018). According to Udofot (1998), semantics is a branch of linguistics that attempts the study of meaning in a scientific and objective manner. It is concerned with accounting for uniformity in the use of language.

Semantic extension involves applying a word to something that falls outside of the word's linguistically specified denotation, on the basis of a principled relationship between the literal and the extended denotation example "Rabbit" meaning animal is extended to mean a meat of that animal, "mouth" which is an oral cavity is extended to mean opening of a cave (Edem 2002 and 2023a). Semantic extension can also be referred to as meaning change. According to Bloomfield. (1933), innovations which change the lexical meaning rather than the grammatical function of a form are classed as change in meaning or Semantic change. The tendency for a human language to change in meaning was noted by Sapir (1993) as cited in Edem (2015) when he said:

Language moves down time in a current of its own making. It has a drift, nothing is perfectly stated, every word, every grammatical element, every location, every sound and accent is a slowly Changing configuration molded by the invisible and impersonal drift that is the life of language (150-151).

Semantic reduplication is a word formulation process in which all or part of a word is repeated to alter or emphasize a particular meaning (Edem, 2023b, 2023c). Sometimes reduplication repeats an entire word and other times. It only repeats part of the word whether it is a whole word or a word process. This work is to document the Semantic extension and reduplication patterns that are common in speeches of final year students of the department of English of Akwa Ibom State University. Semantic extension is a process of extending an existing communication system to express certain need. It is an important role in language origin. The extension is a shift in the set of appropriate contexts for a specific word use or change in a set of reference that is a change in the set of object the word refers to. Semantic reduplication is a word formulation process in which meaning is expressed by repeating all part of a word or a few (Edem 2016a).

Overtime the final year students of the department of English have been at the verge of keeping up with the trends of semantic extensions and reduplication in order to maintain the everyday requirements of people's linguistic demand and to show flexibility in Nigerian English through this flexibility does not overrule linguistic conventions (Edem, 2018, Enang and Edem, 2022). Though some of these reduplications are wrong and the extension in semantic can only be understood between people of the immediate environment and it aids fast and easy comprehension without many people getting to know what the communication is about.

Theoretical Framework

The theoretical framework adopted for this study is Systemic Functional Grammar. Systemic Functional Grammar was propounded by M.A.K Halliday. Before Halliday, there was another Linguist in this grammatical field known as J.R. Firth, the founder of the London School of Linguistics or the Prague School of Linguistics. According to Senam (2014), "the system" refers to the view of language as "a network of systems, or related set of options for making meaning". M.A.K Halliday sees Grammar as a system, not as a rule on the basis that every grammatical structure involves a choice from a describable set of options that is language is meaning potential.

Systemic Functional Grammar (SFG) emerges as a reaction to the inadequacies of traditional grammar. It was propounded by a leading linguist known as M.A.K Halliday. This was a major development in the description of a natural language. It relied on categories or components often referred to as Halliday categories of Grammar. It includes the following; unit, class, system and structure. Eka (1994) postulate "that sentences and clause are instances of the category of unit: verb and noun are instances of class: subject and complements are instances of structure". From this perspective, unit, structure, and class form a system of the theory of Grammar while clauses, sentences and subject may be said to be descriptive categories.

According to Eka (1994), Halliday's work was based on Firthian conception, the Systemic Grammar also sometimes referred to as neo-firthian Grammar the model has structure at the surface Grammar and a system of Semantic feature at the deep grammar". Systemic Grammar theory therefore shifts attention from structure to contextual Grammar in this sense the emphasis is not so much on how an expression conforms to the rules of a language but how effective it is in a particular context of use, thus, it emphasises acceptability of expression rather than Grammatical (Eka 2000, Udofot 2003, Edem 2016b). According to Udofot (2003) in line with the systemic functional grammar model which emphasizes on acceptability rather than grammaticality to ascertain the meaning of a given word or sentence in stress and rhythm in the Nigerian Accent of English identifies three varieties of spoken Nigerian English as non-standard, standard, and sophisticated varieties, which by the identity of varieties differ from British English. Edem (2016b) views point of the features of this model, systemic grammar has four theoretical categories of unit, structure, class and system which are used to account for the fundamental grammatical patterns of any human language. While unit and class apply to both surface and deep planes of grammar, structure operates only in the surface grammar. And this helps to determine the meaning of a word or a sentence.

Semantics

The term semantics is a technical name of the branch of linguistics which deals with the study of meaning. The term in semantics according to Lyon's (1968) was coined from a Greek word meaning to signify. Palmer (1981) notes one of semantic in the Phrase semantic philosophy meaning divination in the Seventeenth century. The term semantics, however, came into popular use about the first half of the twentieth Century with the publication of the meaning of meaning by C. Kogden and I. A. Richards in 1923. The study of meaning took a dramatic turn. According to Udofot (2004), Semantics does not occur in the book itself but in an appendix written by the Anthologist, Malinowsky. The problem of meaning in Primitive language, Udofot explains further that,

The branch of linguistics, semantics attempts to study meaning in a Scientific and objective manner it is concerned with accounting for uniformity in the use of language. It tries to study not the specific instances of language but generalization what de Saussure refers to as Langue (language) rather than Parole (speaking) (Udofot 2004 p.5).

The distinction of semantics is also drawn in Chomsky's Competence and performance. The semantic analysis of language explains sentences and non-verbal cues like gestures and facial expressions are understood, perceived and interpreted or Linked to objects and situations in the real word. The Semantic analysis should not only give meaning of one word as it is in a sentence but should also indicate other meanings when it is reflected in other sentences or situations. It should take into cognizance the belief and background that exist between the speaker and the hearer and the community where the utterance is made and society It's been discussed. (Edem, 2015, 2020, 2023a).

Semantics deals with how meaning are given to words and how different words takes up different meanings depending on the context and usage and this gives a clue in regards to word meaning, sentence meaning, utterance meaning, nonverbal meaning, cultural and stylistic meaning (Udofot and Edem 2018, Edem 2023c).

Semantic Extension

In semantics, the extension of a concept, idea or sign consists of the things to which it applies. It has to do with a set of meaning a word or sentence extends to. Semantics is a branch of linguistics that deals with meaning, changes in meaning, and the principles that govern the relationship between sentences or words and their meanings. Often in Nigerian English, there is the extension of semantic boundaries

of existing words to cover strange meanings, a typical example of semantic extension in English usages in Nigeria are as follows:

- 1) I gave the police man **kola nut** before I was allowed to pass.
In this sentence, "kola nut" shifts to take another meaning in the context as the person may not necessarily mean kola nut. The word may also mean 'a bribe'. I gave the policemen **bribe** before I was allowed to pass. The kola nut extends its meaning to bribe.
- 2) Musa **chased** joy for almost a month.
In this sentence the word 'chased' does not mean to run after. The word 'Chased' here means to go after a woman with the intention of winning her love.
- 3) Okon had to **dress** for him.
In this sentence the word 'dress' does not have anything to do with wearing of clothes. It means to move to the end of a row to create space for other persons (Edem, 2016a 2018).

Semantic extension is one of the most crucial semantic peculiarities of Nigerian English. As the name implies, it is the expansion of meaning to another that is the addition of meaning to a Standard English word (Akindele and Adegbite 1992, Edem 2018, 2020).

Semantic Reduplication

Inkelas and Zoll (2005), Edem and Ekpenyong (2021) define reduplication as the doubling of some morphological constituents (Stem, root, word) to attain some morphological objective and restrict to language morphology only. Common examples in English include "**bye**", "**fifty**", "**see saw**", "**flip flop**" and "**zig zag**". In linguistic reduplication is a morphological process in which the root or stem of a word or even a whole word is repeated exactly or with a slight change. Many expressions used by Nigerians contain unnecessary repetitions of the same idea. This phenomenon may also be referred to as tautology. Saying the same thing more than once without making one's meaning clearer (Edem 2023c). Examples of reduplication include:

- 1) Nigeria's **past history** is worth studying
- 2) There is a **bending corner** along the road
- 3) **Bye** to poor performance in literature.
- 4) **To hell** with bad governance.

In the above examples, the words are reduplicated in the first example, the word "history" can also mean "Past". The words bending and corner refer to the same thing. In the example "bye", the word bye is repeated with the exact words just as "hell" and bad connotes almost the same experience.

Reduplication is used in inflections to convey a grammatical function such as plurality, intensification and also in lexical derivation to create new words. It is used when a speaker adopts a tone more expressive or figurative than ordinary speech and is also often iconic in meaning.

Also, Reduplication is a word formation process that involves copying some parts of a base (a segment, syllable, or morpheme) or even a whole base. The term "reduplication" refers to the copied part of a word, while the term "base" means applies (McCarthy and Prince 1995), Edem and Ekpenyong (2021).

Kiyomi explains succinctly thus,

Given a word with Phonological form x, then reduplication refers to xx or rx (where x is part of X and x can appear either just before X, Just after X or inside X) conditions: (i) xx or rx or must be semantically related to x. (ii) xx or rx must be productive (Kiyomi 1995 p.2).

There are three types of reduplication

- 1) Full reduplication
- 2) Partial reduplication
- 3) Rhyming Reduplication

Full reduplication: It involves the reduplication of the entire word, word stem (Root with one or more affixes) or root.

Example:

Ta Ta, Tick tick, bye bye, bling bling, knock knock, here no words or letter is changed. It is written the same way. Meaning that all the letters are repeated.

Partial Reduplication: In Partial reduplication, only a part of a given word is repeated which gives the meaning of that word. Example
Zig zag, chit chat, ping pong, sing song, tick tok.

Rhyming Reduplication: It is the type of reduplication in which the reduplicated words rhymes with the original element in the phrase for example.
Hockey Pockey, Walkie Talkie, supper dupper etc.

Sentential example of semantic reduplication:

- 1) The operation has **50 50** chance of success.
- 2) The policeman was speaking to the headquarters on **walkie Talkie**.
- 3) We had a long **chit chat** with each other.
- 4) They have a **zig zag** pathway to their home.
- 5) He spoke in a **sing song** voice.
- 6) She is **Supper dupper** excited to join the party at her school.

Semantic Extension in Speeches of Selected Final Year Students of English Department

Semantic extension is one of the most crucial semantic peculiarities of Nigerian English, as the name states, it is the expansion of meaning to another that is "The addition of meaning to a standard English word" (Akindele and Adegbite 1992). An established meaning of words or expressions in Standard English is often extended to convey another meaning in Nigerian English (Edem 2018, 2020). These semantic extensions could be symbolic in most usages and it explicitly convey the meaning that Nigerians could relate to easily. For example, "**kola nut**" kola nut is an English word and it is a seed of the kola tree according to its Standard English meaning. On the other hand, it means and it's often attributed to "bribe" in Nigerian English. Another examples include the use of "strangers" for visitors and extension of "to stay" to mean "live". For example, I live in Akwa Ibom (Enang and Edem, 2022).

Example of Semantic extension as it is prevalent in speeches of selected final year students of Department of English, Akwa Ibom State University, Obio Akpa Campus are as follows:

1. Tortoise

In real sense, a Tortoise means a reptile of family of Testudinae, whose body is enclosed in a shell. But in the context of usage by final year students of English department could mean either the reptile itself or could also refer to a very cunning person, for example in the conversation between Goodluck and Matthew which goes thus.

Goodluck: Did you see Etini?

Matthew: Don't mind that tortoise

Goodluck: What happened again?

Matthew: He's just too selfish cunning and greedy

Goodluck: How do you mean?

Matthew: He told the SUG aspirants who came to consult us for elections that he is the bone of final year students of English that they should give the consultations to him that it is settled.

In conversation above the word tortoise which means reptile shifts to stand for an attitude of the persona described above seen as unpredictable, cunning or unreliable or not to be trusted.

2. **Bad Heart**

In Standard British English, to have a bad heart means to have a malfunctioning heart, but in the context of usage in it Nigerian such as English it conveys a different meaning be wicked or to have a wicked mind. The word "bad" is often associated with event, places or person, but final year students of English employ the word to function as a psychological metaphor for the heart which gives it another meaning different from the conventional meaning. For example conversation: between a different set of students as shown below adds credence to this assertion.

Peace: Edara Phan has a very bad heart?

Glory: Did I not tell you? What happened this time?

Peace: she refused to collect the assignment to submit for me, according to her I want to stress her to go back to the lecturer's office.

Glory: Can you imagine?

Peace: That's how I lost the marks for assignment even after much pleasing.

Glory: I know, even me, I failed linguistics because she blatantly refused to show the correct answer to the compulsory question.

In the above conversation between Glory and Peace the word "Bad heart" does not mean a malfunctioning heart but refers to someone who doesn't have compassion to other people or one who is not a team player but selfish

3. **Drop**

In standard usage, the word "drop" refers to a fall or to allow something fall or to keep something but the final year students of English department use the word to mean to "get off" from a bike or any vehicle even when "alight" is the most appropriate word to be used. Example.

Sediong: Bike (calls a bike) I am going to Havilah School at Ikot Okoro Road, Abak but you will drop this my friend at Atan Junction.

Bikeman: Okay, enter!

In the conversation above the word *drop* by Sediong means to alight his friend at Atan Junction.

4. Escort

In Standard British English usage, the word "escort" means to accompany a person to where he is going, this has to do with the provision of security. However, the word has a different meaning when used by final year English Students as applicable with Nigerian Speakers of English. Escorts is shifted to mean "see off" as it is seen in the following conversation.

Enwongo: Please, I want to go, give me my book.

Etini: Please, I am not done, exercise a little patience.

Enwongo: My friends are leaving and I want to join them

Etini: Do not worry I will *escort* you to College Road where you will pick a bike.

Enwongo: Okay

In the conversation shown above the word "escort" is extended to mean to "see off".

Semantic Reduplication in Speeches of Selected Final Year Students of English Department

According to Okoro (2000), semantic reduplication is the repetition of the same idea using two different lexical items. They occur in set of two different words that tend to express the same idea. The identified categories of semantic reduplications in the participant's interactions of speech of selected final year Students of English Department are discussed under the following categories.

1. Varieties induced reduplication

This is a category of semantic reduplication used by final year students of the department of English Department in Akwa Ibom State University. In this category of semantic reduplication, the Students do not pay attention to their lexical differences between American and British English. This makes the students often use the lexical version of the two varieties to describe the same item. Example

Maurice: I am looking for Dr. Jackson's new office

Victoria: Go to the *extreme end* of the language laboratory block.

Edidong: Meek Essien likes wearing *short knickers* to Monday classes

Veronica: So you do notice that too?

Mfon: *Should in case* you want to leave the library, please carry my phone alongside.

Rhema: okay

Sunny: I do not know what is wrong with favour

Ifiokobong: What is wrong with him (ifiok obong)?

Sunny: He is very intelligent but he still fail his courses

2. **Contrastive reduplication:**

Contrastive reduplication is used by English Department Students to mean a set of reduplicated expressions which suggest opposing meaning to what exactly is expected. These are used conventionally which the sociocultural meaning are removed from the literal meaning of the lexical items for example.

Benjamin: I was sleeping all through Dr. Jackson's class.

Richard: I know, the man just sees and no see (overlook)

Nsiong: Sediong Ekeruke has ignored a lot of critics.

Catherine: He is deaf and hears what he wants to (meaning he is selective on what to responds to).

Esther: I pity udeme upon

Brenda: Yes! She has friends but has no friends.

(all her friends are irresponsible or on reliable)

3. **Collocational reduplication**

Collocational is the habitual co-occurrence of two words or their natural selection in the sentence that help in meaning orientation. The associated words determine the intended, referential and contextual meaning depending on the category of speakers. For example,

1. It is my personal opinion
2. I gave the book to my own friend
3. Prof. Emenyi is on her sabbatical year.

Furthermore, reduplication as it is used by the final year students of English department can also be subdivided and can be analysed based on the various parts of speech in English. Example,

Reduplicated adjectives

An adjective is the word that qualifies or modifies a noun. It gives information about the noun or its equivalence. It describes the predictable properties of what is being referred to, in terms of the shape, age, colour, size, value and origin, among others. However, in its reduplication from the context of usage, by final year students of the department of English. For example

1. Precious: likes making long long hair style(Emphasis)
 2. Break the stone into small small pieces(uniformity)
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3. It is raining drive small small (caution)
4. Victoria: is living large large (profusion)
5. Run fast fast we are waiting for you (urgency)
6. Mary: sells cheap cheap clothes (uniformity)
7. Uwakmfon: wears big big clothes (frequency)

Reduplication verbs

It verb is a doing word. The reduplicated forms are in the category of lexical verbs which should function independently in the sentence. The examples are extracted from the communicative activities of the participants.

Examples

Mercy: Emem has refused to pay me the debt

Rebecca: Borrow borrow people often have excuses

Mfon: Mercy has been summoned for what he said the other day.

Emem: her talk talk life has gotten her into trouble

Cry cry babies can be quite disturbing

Reduplicated nouns

A noun is a name given to a person, an animal, a place or thing, a condition or a state of being. The noun have separate inflectional forms for possessive or genitive case and for number (singular or plural) and are often derived from other word clauses by the addition of suffixes. There duplicated noun could generate meanings that are explicated in different word class

1. To be free from being a boy boy requires some patience.
2. The food am eating is stone stone
3. I do not like that corner corner road, it is very dangerous

Reduplicated adverb

An adverb is a modifier for other elements and answer questions on how, when, where in what way and to what extent. An adverb performs a descriptive function at a sentential level.

Examples

1. James is being paid huge monthly monthly salaries
 2. Since the convocation is tomorrow, the celebrant should be here today today
 3. Mary and her family lives inside inside the village
 4. Mr. Daniel's House is down down the street
 5. Drive slowly slowly, the road is bad.
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CONCLUSION

This paper harps on the use of semantic extensions in expressions among Students of English Department of Akwa Ibom State University. It analyzes things related to actions, persons, social interaction among others. The study reveals that the English Language parts of speech examined sometimes can change their semantic meaning and form other meanings within a speech Community. This research work also shows the reduplication of words in other to create emphasis and this plays a vital role in passing information amongst Nigerian Speakers of English language as seen in Akwa Ibom State University. This research concludes that students use creative coinages that can only be understood within the speech Community in order to hide the meaning of the lexical items in their conversations to speakers outside the speech community or domain. This work has contributed immensely to the ongoing discourse or emerging trends in Nigerian English usage.

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