CHAPTER II

REVIEW OF RELATED STUDIES

2.1 The Definition of Semantics

Semantics is generally considered to be the study of meaning in languages. However, this definition had let us to question about what is the nature of the meaning itself. How is the best way to describe what meaning is comes to be the problem here, such as the study of linguistic meaning is more often used for the sake of the analytical convenience. It is then important to make clear limits that semantics concerns to the nature of meaning only.

The term of Semantics was first introduced in the end of 19th century. The term Semantics in English was adopted from French term, “semantique”. Before it was introduced in 1890’s, the term was once used in phrase Semantic Philosophy to mean *divination*. This term does not refer to the meaning but refer to its development, which is later known as ’Historical Semantics’.

Other names that have been used in Semantics were *semasiology, semology, semiotics, sememics, and semics*. Scholars have often used some of these terms to suit their own interests and orientation in wider or narrower sense than that of term “semantics” known today. If we want to make the definition clear, it is therefore necessary to redefine semantics into a more specific definition, the one that could limit semantics into the study of more specific types of meaning only. As students of language, we also need to make clear limits of the study of meaning into linguistics proper. Then we may say that semantics is the study of meaning of words, phrase, or sentences in the language or semantics is the study of meaning of the language, or simply the study of linguistics meaning.
In fact, the term Semantics has been even used in until the 20th century as can be evident from Learner’s Dictionary of Current English, which defines semantics “branch of philology concerned with changes of the meaning of words”. In other words, the dictionary defines semantics and linguistics into plural nouns, but such similar words as economics, physics, etc as singular ones.

It was not until the publication of Breal’s book English version Semantics: studies the science of meaning in 1900 that the term semantics was then treated as the ‘science’ of meaning and that is not primarily concerned with the historical change of meaning (historical semantics). Since then, semantics has well been recognized as one of the linguistics studies and known as scientific study of meaning. (Palmer, 1976:1-2)

Some definitions of Semantics given by the Linguist are as follows:

1. Semantics is the study of meaning. It is concerned with what sentences and other Linguistics objects expresses, not with the arrangement of their syntactic parts of their pronunciation. (J.J. Katz, 1972:1)

2. Semantics is the technical term used to refer to the study of meaning. (F.R.Palmer, 1976:1)

3. Semantics is the branch of Linguistics concerned with studying the meaning of words and sentences. (Hornby, 1972:1)

4. Semantics is generally defined as the study of meaning. (Lyons, 1977:1)

2.2 The Scope of Semantics

Although the study of meaning became more significant at the early twentieth century, many Linguist study language without reference to the
meaning. Two twentieth century American Linguists have been particularly influential in shaping “the study of language without meaning”, i.e. Leonard Humprey and Chomsky.

In fact, there are at least two major approaches to the way in which meaning in language study is studied, each of which is often very influential in determining which facts of meaning are relevant for semantics.

The first is linguistic approach. The students of language or linguists have long been interested in the way in which meaning in a language is structured. They have studied of the meaning of words and the semantics structure of sentences. Some of them also have distinguished between different types of meaning in language.

The second is philosophical approach. Philosophers have investigated the relation between linguistic expression such as the words of language, persons, things, and events in the world to which these words refer.

Although there may be different approaches to semantics, three basic terms seem to be widely mentioned in each of these approaches, i.e. meaning, sense and references. (Palmer, 1976:19-25)

2.2.1 Meaning

The term meaning is simply derived from the word mean. The term meaning is, of course, much familiar to us all. The study of speech sound without regard to meanings is an abstraction: in actual use, speech sounds are uttered as signals. Nearer to the sense we need is that of ‘cloud’ means ‘thunder’ or ‘A red light’ means ‘stop’. For means here is used to signs, both natural and
conventional, that indicates something that is happening or will happen, or something that has to be done.

There are some definitions of meaning from some Linguists, such as:

- Meaning is a word of ordinary, everyday vocabulary of English (Lyons, 1977:4)
- Meaning is ideas or concepts, which can be transferred from the mind of the speaker to the mind of the hearer by embodying them, as it was, in the forms of language or another (Dongoran, 1991:1)
- Meaning is a complex phenomenon involving relationship between a language and the mind of its speakers and the practical use to which it is put (Nikelas, 1988:231).

There are two different sort of meanings, Linguistic Meaning and Speaker Meaning. In general, Linguistic Meaning is meaning of that expression in some from of language. Speaker meaning is what a speaker means in producing an utterance. In using the language, a speaker may sometimes use a word to mean something different from what it means literally.

Although we are supposed not to make words mean what they do not mean, we sometimes mean something different from what our words mean (linguistically). In other words, we sometimes speak non-literally (slang words). Thus, if we are speaking non-literally, then we will mean something different from what our words mean. If we are speaking literally, than we mean what our words mean.

If a speaker always speaks literally and means what his words mean, there will be no important difference between the linguistic meaning and the
speaker meaning. However, a speaker sometimes speaks non-literally, therefore, means something different from what the words mean. (Palmer, 1976:34-36)

2.2.2 Sense and Reference

Both words and proper names have a meaning that can be used to refer to things or objects. The German philosopher and Mathematician, Gotlob Frege, propose a distinction between the reference of a word and the sense of a word. The reference of a word is the object designated by the word. For example the reference of the word *chair* is the object designated by *it*. Meanwhile the sense of a word is the additional meaning attached to the word.

When people speak of the meaning of a word, they are usually speaking about one of its sense; usually what they believe is the primary or the central sense. It is not always obvious, however, how many different senses should be discriminated for a word. For example, consider whether *suggest* has different sense when used with a human subject from the sense when used with inhuman subject as follow:

- My father suggests me to go to college
- The crow suggest me to go to college

Of course the two sentences above have a very different sense, because the second sentence actually does not make sense, for the word suggest is always used for human.

Palmer (1976) has defined the reference and the sense as following:

“Reference deals with the relationship between the linguistic elements, words, sentence, etc, and the nonlinguistic world of...
experience. While sense relates to the complex system of relationships that hold between the linguistic element themselves (mostly the words); it is concerned only with intra linguistic relation.” (Palmer, 1976:30)

Phrases, like words, normally both have sense and can be used to refer. Thus, the phrase “The man who is my father” refers to a certain individual and has a certain sense which could be different from that of “The man who married my mother”, although both expression usually have the same reference.

2.3 Varieties of Meaning

There are two different types of varieties meaning in semantics, they are Linguistic meaning and Speaker meaning. Linguistic meaning is simply the meaning or meaning of that expression in some from language. For example, in one form of language, known as Standard British English, the word “run” means something different in the sentences:

- I like to run
  Run means an activity where a person moves at a spend faster than walking

- He has run out of money
  Run means he does not have any money

- Don’t worry, I can run my own race
  Run means I can solve or handle problem without others help.

- He used to run guns across the border
  Run means the smuggling activity or bringing or taking something into a country illegally and secretly
- The ferries do not run on Christmas day
  Run means that the ferries will not be operated on Christmas day
- Your nose is running
  Runs mean that liquid is dripping out of the nose

Speaker meaning is what a speaker means in producing an utterance. The speaker meaning that brings the meaning of what speaker has in producing an utterance, may sometimes use the words to mean something different from that meaning of the lexical word. So, the speaker speaks non-literally. But when the speaker means what the words really mean, so the speaker means literally.

In fact, non-literal meaning is a part of speaker meaning. The following figure can show how meaning can have several distinctions: (J.J. Katz, 1963:479)

![Diagram of Meaning](chart.png)

- **2.3.1 Literal Meaning**
  If a speaker speaks literally, then he means what his word mean. There is no something different from what the expression means. We can easily
understand this kind of meaning if we are familiar and know the vocabularies one may speak. Look at the example below:

- We are watching television
- They go to the school
- You are a lazy boy

All of the sentences above are literal in meaning as long as the speaker means literally. The sentences are easy to understand for we are familiar and know all the vocabularies.

2.3.2 Non-Literal Meaning

When a speaker speaks something which implies the different meaning from the real meaning of the words mean he is speaking non-literally. So, non-literal meaning occurs when the speaker means something different from what the words or sentences really mean. The sentences or the words have another hidden meaning besides the lexical meaning.

Non-literal meaning is a way to express an idea in abstract or imaginative way. Non-literal meaning is also the words use in some other ways rather in their literal meaning. The hearer may difficult to understand the meaning of the speaker. Therefore, it is important for everyone to understand the non-literal meaning to avoid misunderstanding in daily conversation.

In the case of non-literal meaning, there are a number of different ways one can speak non-literally. Non-literal uses of language are called figurative language. Wren and Martin classified type of figure of speech such as, simile,
metaphor, personification, hyperbole, synecdoche and oxymoron. Each of these parts will be explained below.

2.3.2.1 Simile

Simile is a figure of speech in which a comparison is made between persons or things usually by the means of words, like and as (Dictionary of Language and Linguistics :209). A simile is not just an ordinary comparison. For example saying “you are like my mother”, is not a simile because the things that are being compared is basically the same. A simile must compare two things that are found to be alike in an aspect. Simile resembles metaphor, in which both of them are comparing two different things. But the difference is that the use of words “like and as” in simile, while metaphor does not use it. For example, their horns are soft as finger nails. In this sentence the word horns are compared with finger nails which are soft. As we know horns and finger nails are different, horns are hard not soft but in the sentence horns are described soft as finger nails.

A simile can explicitly provide the basis of a comparison or leave this basis implicit. For instance, the following similes are implicit, leaving an audience to determine for themselves which features are being predicated of a target:

- "My dad was a mechanic by trade when he was in the Army," Raymond Thompson said. "When he got the tools out, he was like a surgeon."
More detail is present in the following similes, but it is still a matter of inference as to what features are actually predicated of the target:

- He fights like a lion.
- He swims as fast as a fish.
- He slithers like a snake.
- He runs like a cheetah.

In contrast, the following similes explicitly state the features that are predicated of each target:

- When he got the tools out, he was as precise and thorough as a surgeon.
- He drinks copiously like a fish.
- She walks as gracefully and elegantly as a cat.
- He was as a lion in the fight.
- They fought as if they were warriors.

Unlike a metaphor, a simile can be as precise as the user needs it to be, to explicitly predicate a single feature of a target or to vaguely predicate an under-determined and open-ended body of features. Empirical research supports the observation that similes are more likely to be used with explicit explanations of their intended meaning; this offers some support to the claim that similes are preferred if a user wants to associate an unusual or out-of-the-ordinary property with a target.

2.3.2.2 Metaphor
Metaphor is comparison that show how two things that are not alike in most ways are similar in one important way. Unlike similes that use the words “as” or “like” to make a comparison, metaphors state that something is something else.

According to Dictionary of Language and Linguistics, metaphor is a figure of speech in which a name or descriptive term is applied to a person or object to which it is not literally applicable thus implying a comparison in order to show that the two things have the same qualities and to make the description more powerful. For example, he is a pig. The sentence does not mean that the man is pig. But, the sentence uses metaphor that might involve comparison of appearance and morality as well.

Common types of metaphor:

- A dead metaphor is one in which the sense of the transferred image is absent. Examples: "to grasp a concept" and "to gather what you've understood" use physical action as a metaphor for understanding, most do not visualize the action; dead metaphors normally go unnoticed. Some people distinguish between a "dead metaphor" whose origin most speakers ignore, e.g. "to break the ice". Others use dead metaphor to denote both concepts, and generally use it to describe a metaphoric cliché.

- An extended metaphor (conceit), establishes a principal subject (comparison) and subsidiary subjects (comparisons). The As You Like It quotation is a good example, the world is described as a stage, and then
men and women are subsidiary subjects further described in the same context.

- A **mixed metaphor** is one that leaps from one identification to a second identification inconsistent with the first. Example: "If we can hit that bullseye then the rest of the dominoes will fall like a house of cards... Checkmate."

- Per Hans Blumenberg’s metaphorology, **absolute metaphor** denotes a figure or a concept that cannot be reduced to, or replaced with solely conceptual thought and language. Absolute metaphors, e.g. “light” (for “truth”) and “seafaring” (for “human existence”) – have distinctive meanings (unlike the literal meanings), and, thereby, function as orientations in the world, and as theoretic questions, such as presenting the world as a whole. Because they exist at the pre-predicative level, express and structure **pragmatic** and theoretical views of Man and the World.

### 2.3.2.3 Personification

**Personification** is the transfer of human characteristic to an object, animal, or abstract idea. It makes the animals and the animate objects talk or behave as a human.

According to Webster’s dictionary (1971: 123) “Personification is a kind of non-literal meaning that by personifying an object as an attribution of personal qualities (as a form characters) representation of things or abstraction as a person or by human form.” For example, *the trees are afraid to put forth*
This word *trees* in the sentence figure as a human being that has been *afraid* represent for fear or being frightened. Indeed such emotional feelings are only shown as a natural reaction from human when they feel something wrong or being shocked. The other example of personification is:

- The pen is dancing on the paper
- Every night, the moon comes by just to say goodnight to me.

The first sentence is considered as a personification because it considers the pen as an inanimate thing, which has human ability to dance. Literally, the sentence means that the pen is dancing on a paper just like a human. It is absolutely impossible. So, we have to take the meaning figuratively, which means that someone is using the pen to write on the paper.

The second sentence, we may see how the moon as the inanimate object is depicted as human. It is implies that the moon has legs to come by and talk by saying goodnight to me. Of course, it is impossible in real life. The possible interpretation for this expression is that the moon always shines every night as the sign for someone to sleep.

### 2.3.2.4 Hyperbole

Hyperbole derived from the Greek. It is from two words, they are *hyper* which means *over* and *ballein* which means *to throw*. So, hyperbole can be defined as a figurative expression, which exaggerates the number, size, or quality of something in order to emphasize certain points in a statement.
Kerf (1991:135) says “Hiperbola adalah semacam gaya bahasa yang mengandung suatu pernyataan yang berlebihan, dengan embesar-besarkan suatu hal”. From this definition, we can say that hyperbole is used by exaggerating something to emphasize certain points in a sentence. Hyperbole is used to create emphasis. It is a literary device often used in poetry, and is frequently encountered in casual speech. It is also a visual technique in which a deliberate exaggeration of a particular part of an image is employed. An example is the exaggeration of a person's facial feature in a political cartoon.

Some examples of use of hyperbole include:

- These books weigh a ton. (These books are heavy.)
- I could sleep for a year. (I could sleep for a long time.)
- The path went on forever. (The path was very long.)
- I'm doing a million things right now. (I'm busy.)
- I could eat a horse. (I'm hungry.)

2.3.2.5 Oxymoron

Oxymoron (plural oxymora (greek plural) or, more often, oxymorons) ("sharply dull" in Greek) is a figure of speech that combines two normally contradictory terms. They appear in a range of contexts, from inadvertent errors such as extremely average, to deliberate puns like same difference, to literary oxymorons that have been carefully crafted to reveal a paradox, for
example, *a silent voice*. In this case usually there are two contradictory words put together, that lexically have different meaning.

Other example of oxymoron:

- Deafening silence
- Sweet sorrow
- Showbiz news
- Forward retreat
- Jumbo Shrimp
- *Silent Scream*
- *Quiet Riot*

2.3.2.6 Synecdoche

The word *synecdoche* is derived from a Greek word “synekdechestai”, which means “to take up”. Keraf (1991:142) says, “sinekdot adalah semacam gaya bahasa yang mempergunakan sebagian dari sesuatu hal untuk menyatakan keseluruhan (pars pro toto) atau mempergunakan keseluruhan untuk menyatakan sebagian (totum pro parte).

From the definition above, we may conclude that synecdoche may be divided into two kinds, as follows:

- A part is used to mean the whole thing, for example; *they had bought a new machine two days ago*. The word *machine* is a part of car. In this sentence, the word *machine* represents *the car*. 
- The whole is used to mean a part, for example; *did you see the competition between German and England*. In this sentence, German and England are used as a substitution on players of both countries.

The use of synecdoche is a common way to emphasize an important aspect of a fiction*al character*; for example, a character might be consistently described by a single body part, such as the eyes, which come to represent the character. This is often used when the main character does not know or care about the names of the characters that he/she is referring to.

Also, sonnets and other forms of love poetry frequently use synecdoches to characterize the beloved in terms of individual body parts rather than a whole, coherent self. This practice is especially common in the Petrarchan sonnet, where the idealised beloved is often described part by part, from head to toe.

**Examples**

- Where a part refers to the whole:
  - "White hair" for an elderly person
  - "Fingers" or "Legs" as a nickname
  - "A pair of hands" referring to a worker

- Where a whole thing is used to refer to a part of it:
  - "The city" passing a law, meaning that the local government has passed a law
A "country being at war", when only its representative army is fighting, and the landmass itself is obviously not at war

- A general class name used to denote a specific member of that or an associated class
  - "Bug" for any kind of insect or spider
  - "Truck" for any four-wheel drive vehicle (as well as long-haul trailers etc.)

- A specific class name used to refer to a general set of associated things
  - "Range Rover" for all four-wheel drive vehicle
  - "Thermos" for any kind of vacuum flask for holding a hot drink

- Using the material a thing is made of to refer to that thing:
  - "Willow" for cricket bat,
  - "Plastic" for credit card,
  - "Pigskin" for an American or Canadian football, from the early use of a pig's bladder to cover those balls
  - "Iron" for a clothes iron