

**Semantic Extension and Re-duplication in Speeches of Selected Final Year Students of
Akwa Ibom State University**

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Abstract

This work sets out to study aspects of semantic extension and re-duplication in speeches of selected students of the Department of English, Akwa Ibom State University. The objective of this research is to identify some long-observed use of Semantic extensions and re-duplication in the student's use of English. The instrument used in collecting data was observation with voice recording from thirty final year students of the Department of English, Akwa Ibom State University, using Purposive Sampling Method to achieve the desired impacts. The study adopts Halliday's Systemic Functional Grammar theory, as a framework for analysing 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 Nigerian speakers to express themselves and show flexibility of the English Language in their immediate environment. Though semantic extension and re-duplication can be used in speech intentionally and unintentionally, the speaker may not know that the words used express a different meaning. It concludes that semantic extension 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 changing 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 p.21). According to Udofot (1998 p.5) "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, Josephine Bowerman (2020, p.1), Edem (2002) and Edem (2023a), Utin, (2023).

Semantic extension can also be referred to as meaning change. According to Bloomfield. (1933, p.425) "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 (2015a) 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 (261-262).

Semantic reduplication is a word formulation process in which all or part of a word is repeated to alter or emphasize a particular meaning (see Edem, 2023b, Edem, 2023c, Utin, (2024). 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 extensions and re-duplication patterns that are common in speeches of most Nigerian speakers of English using the final year students of the department of English of Akwa Ibom State University as the case study.

Semantic extension is therefore a process of extending an existing communication system to express certain need. It is an important role in language origin. Edem (2018) sees the extension as 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 objects the word refers to. Semantic reduplication is a word formulation process in which meaning is expressed by repeating all parts 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 re-duplication in order to maintain the everyday requirements of people's linguistic demands and to show flexibility in Nigerian English though this flexibility does not overrule linguistic conventions (see Edem, 2018, Enang and Edem, 2022 for details). Though some of these re-duplications are wrong and the extension in semantics 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, p.12) "The system" refers to the view of language as "a network of system, 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, p.26) 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, p.25) "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 grammaticality (Eka 2000, Udofot 2003, Edem 2016b, Utin, 2024).

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. According to Edem (2016b) in his contribution to the view 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 semantics according to Lyon's (1968, p.400) "was coined from a Greek word meaning. to signify". Palmer (1981 p.1) notes one of semantic in the Phrase semantic philosophy meaning divination in the Seventeenth century. besides another occurrence of semantics in the paper titled "Reflected meanings: a point in semantics which was read to the American Philological Association in 1844.

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, p.5)" "The term Semantics does not however 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 world. 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 believes and background that exists between the speaker and the hearer and the community where the utterance is made and the Society It's been discussed. (Edem, 2015b, Edem 2020, Edem 2023a). Semantics deals with how meanings are given to words and how different words take up different meanings depending on the context and usage and this gives a clue with regards to word meaning, sentence meaning, utterance meaning, non-verbal meaning, cultural and stylistic meaning (Udofot and Edem 2018, Edem 2023b, 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 it's meaning to bribe.
- 2) Musa **chased** joy for almost a month.
In this sentence the word 'chase does not mean to run after. The word 'Chase' here means to go after a woman with the intention of winning her lobe.
- 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. (please see Edem, 2018, Edem, 2016a, Edem 2022).

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 p.55, Edem 2018, Edem 2020).

Semantic Re-duplication

Inkelas and Zoll (2005) and Edem and Ekpenyong (2021) define re-duplication as the doubling of some morphological constituents (Stem, root, word) to attain some morphological objective (p.114) and restrict to language morphology only. Common examples in English include "**bye**

bye", "fifty fifty, "see saw", flip flop" and "zig zag". In linguistic re-duplication 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 2023b, 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 bye** to poor performance in literature.
- 4) **To hell** with bad governance.

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

Re-duplication 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 (Edem 2015b, Edem 2018, Enang and Edem 2022).

Also, it 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 "re-duplication" refers to the copied part of a word, while the term "base" means applies (McCarthy and Prince 1995), (Edem and Ekpenyong 2021, Edem 2016a, Edem 2016b)

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 re-duplication

- 1) Full re-duplication
- 2) Partial re-duplication
- 3) Rhyming Re-duplication

Full re-duplication: Involves the re-duplication 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 Re-duplication: In Partial re-duplication, 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 Re-duplication: It is the type of re-duplication in which the re-duplicated words rhyme with the original element in the Phrase for example.
Hockey Pockey, Walkie Talkie, supper dupper etc.

Sentential example of semantic re-duplication:

- 1) The operation has **50 50** chance of success.
- 2) The policeman was speaking to the headquarter 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 implies, it is the expansion of meaning to another that is "the addition of meaning to a standard English word" (Akindele and Adegbite 1992, p.55). An established meaning of words or expressions in standard English is often extended to convey another meaning in Nigerian English (Edem 2018, Edem, 2020, Edem 2022). 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 example includes 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, Edem 2015a).

Example of Semantic extension as it is prevalent in speeches of 30 selected final year students of department of English, Akwa Ibom State University and the researchers used Purposive Sampling Technique in gathering data for the research and this approach was most convenient to achieve the desired result:

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 the said students could mean either the reptile itself or could also refer to a very cunning person, for example in the conversations 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 the conversations 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 one 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 Nigerian English, it conveys a different meaning such as; be wicked or to have a wicked mind. The word "bad" is often associated with events, places or persons, 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, conversations: 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 pleading.

Glory: I know, even me, I failed Applied 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 or she is going, this has to do with the provision of security. However, the word has a different meaning when used by the said Students as applicable with Nigerian Speakers of English. Escort is shifted to mean "see off" as it is seen in the following conversations.

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 conversations shown above, the word "escort" is extended to mean to "see off" by the Nigerian speakers of English.

Semantic Re-duplication in Speeches of Selected Final Year Students of English Department

According to Okoro (2000, Edem 2015b, Edem, 2016a) semantic re-duplication is the repetition of the same idea using two different lexical items. These occur in set of two different

words that tend to express the same idea. The identified categories of semantic re-duplications in the participant's interactions of speech of selected final year Students of English Department are discussed under the following categories.

5. Varieties induced re-duplication

This is a category of semantic re-duplication 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:

1. **Maurice:** I am looking for Dr. Jackson's new office **Victoria:** Go to the *extreme end* of the language lab. block.
2. **Edidiong:** Meek Essien likes wearing *short knickers* to Monday classes
Veronica: So you do notice that too?
3. **Mfon:** *Should in case* you want to leave the library, please carry my phone alongside.
Rhema: okay
4. **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 fails his courses

6. Contrastive re-duplication:

Contrastive re-duplication is used by English Department Students of the University to mean a set of re-duplicated expressions which suggest opposing meaning to what exactly is expected. These re-duplicated expressions as observed by Edem (2015b, p.265) are used conventionally when the socio-cultural meanings are removed from the literal meanings of the lexical items as seen in the example below:

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 respond to).

Esther: I pity udeme upon

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

(all her friends are irresponsible or unreliable)

3. Collocational Re-duplication

Collocational is the habitual co-occurrence of two words or their natural selection in the sentence that help in meaning orientation. The associated words as Edem (2023b) puts it, 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 leave.

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.

4. Re-duplicated 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 re-duplication from the context of usage, by final year students of the department of English as shown in the following examples, the re-duplicated adjectives were used by the speakers for different purposes. Examples shown below:

1. Precious: likes making **long long** hair style (Emphasis)
2. Break the stone into **small small** pieces (uniformity)
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)

5. Re-duplicated verbs

Its verb is a doing word. The re-duplicated 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

6. Re-duplicated 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 has separate inflectional forms for possessive or genitive case and for number (singular or plural) and are often derived from other word classes 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

7. Re-duplicated 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:

- h. James is being paid huge **monthly monthly** salaries
- i. Since the convocation is tomorrow, the celebrant should be here **today today**
- j. Mary and her family lives **in side in side** the village

- k. Mr. Daniel's House is **down down** the street
- l. Drive **slowly slowly**, the road is bad.

Conclusion

This paper harps on the use of semantic extensions in expressions among Students of English Department of Akwa Ibom State University. It analyses 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 work also shows that some words are re-duplicated in other to create emphasis and this plays a vital role in passing information amongst Nigerian Speakers of English as seen in Akwa Ibom State University. This research concludes that students use some creative coinages that can only be understood within the speech Community in order to draw attention to the re-duplicated meanings of the lexical items in their conversations to speakers within the speech community or domain. This work has contributed immensely to the ongoing discourse on the Englishes or emerging trends in Nigerian English usage.

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