**Speaker/pragmatic meaning**-concerned with ways in which literal meaning is refined and reached of extended to arrive at an understanding of what a speaker meant in uttering a particular expression.Literal meaning refers to what the words are intending to mean.In pragmatics,interoretations are xtracted from situations and background knowledge.For example the sentence ; I forgot the paper.Its Sunday morning.You being the speaker have just returned in the house from a local shop where you were from buying some items including a newspaper.In this context,your roommate understands you say that you forgot to buya copy of Sunday newspaper for that morning and the time of forgetting was where you were.

**Semantic/linguistic meaning**-deals with the literal meaning of words and the way meanings are combined from which the whole of a particular utterance is constructed.Facts bear upon interpretation of utterances.For instance the sentence i forgot the paper.Semantics provide a literal meaning of the elements that constitute such a sentence and the interpretation can be the person who is speaking at some time before the time of speaking forgot a particular item,the paper.

**Properties of language**

there are certain properties and relations that exists that define a language. They are about the facts of linguistic expression and the real world.

* There are facts about linguistic expression themselves and the relations that hold among them.
* There are facts about the rship btwn linguistic expressions and the world.
* There are facts abt the rship btwn linguistic expressions and the speakers who use them to formulate thoughts, communicate ideas, to persuade.

1)**Actual meaning**-language can express actual meaning. According to Ark Majian this is the property of a language of being meaningful or meaningless. Native speakers are usually conscious of the distinction between meaningful and meaningless expressions. The lexicon of a language must specify meaningful words and specify them in some way.The phrase ‘camels have humps’ means that camels have humps. Semantic studies tries to establish why an expression of this kind has only this king of meaning rather than any other one. This kind of xpression represent the primary data for a semantic theory to account for. This translates to interpreting an utterance purely on the basis of the literal sense of the words use.

Procrastinate-push forward

Bachelor- unmarried adult male

Mother-female parents

2**) Ambiguity**-Occurs when a word or a sentence has more than one meaning to an expression. We have two types of ambiguity i.e lexical and structural

i)**Lexical ambiguity**-Occurs when a word in a sentence has more than one meaning e.g she couldn’t bear children-bear-Put up with, deliver; bat-baseball bat, flying rodent. To detect ambiguity, the hearer must appeal to encyclopaedic representations.

ii)**Structural ambiguity**-relates to how lexical items interact with one another within a sentence e.g The watchman greeted the girl with a smile,

-The watchman who had a smile greeted the girl

-The girl with a smile was greeted by the watchman.

**Sources of ambiguity**

a)**Generic xter of a word**-The generic sense is abstract and levels of abstraction differ from one word to another e.g A plant is more abstract that a tree which is more abstract than acacia. Such words represents generalization bcz they denote a class of thngs bound together by some factors.

b)**Multiplicity aspects in every word**-some words are not completely homogenous in their meaning for example the word table can mean, a tool in a hotel,multiplication table,to present views in a meeting or content in a book.

c)**Lack of clear cut boundaries in non-linguistic world**=In a language use we are confronted with phenomenon that emerge into one another or overlap or must be cut into discrete units e.g The colour of spectrum is a continuam into which every culture introduces a number of arbitrary distinctions. Other words that overlap or fall within the continuum include equality,beauty,bad,greed or corruption

d) **Lack of familiarity with the referent of a word** e.g numbers 1,2,3,4, 5 when used by a conductor can mean a route and when used by a mechanic it can mean spanners,Depends on general knowledge and special interest of each individual.

3) **Anomaly**-languages have the capacity to xpress meaninglessness/senselessness. An xpression is anomalous when the meanings of its individual words are incompatible e.g colourless green ideas sleep furiously. Such xpressions have no conventional interpretations in semantics but have full grammatical meaning.

**Affinities (closeness) and disaffinities (distance)**

* **Syntagmatic affinity and disaffinity(-co-occurrence)**

It refers to the kind of closness shared by any two words such that they can co-occur in a context. Like’ the dog barked’ there is sense of compatibility since dog has the capacity to execute the action denoted by the verb.

Syntagmatic **disaffinity** is revealed by syntagmatic abnormality that doesn’t infringe upon the grammatic constraints, when the words do ot co-occur with others.. ‘Lions are chapping’

* **Paradigmatic affinities and disaffiity (substitution)**

For every word in a sentence there must be a substitution outside the sentence. The substitute must bear semantic and grammatical correspondence in profile with the affected word. A transitive verb can only be a substitute for another transitive verb. Words that can substitute one another share a **paradigmatic affinity** those that do not share a **paradigmatic dissafinity.**

**Semantic traits**

a)**Criterial a**nd **excluded** traits are revealed through entailment relations between sentences. For example animal is a criterial trait of a dog meaning you cant define what a dog is without mentioning the word animal hence a dog entails it’s an animal. Fish now will become an excluded trait of a dog so that it’s a dog and would entail it’s not a fish. **Hence the criterial trait is an integral part of an entity and defines it** hence must be included in definition.

To diagnose the **expected, possible and unexpected** traits we use the but-test.The expression can bark is a feature of a dog. However ‘it’s a dog’ doesn’t entail ‘it can bark’ hence it becomes **unexpected trait**. This can be illustrated as follows

i)Its a dog,but it can bark-(odd)

ii)its adog,but it cant bark-(normal expected trait)

**A possible** trait is noted when both sentences exhibits expressive paradox yet the sentences are normal e.g

i)Its adog,but its brown-(why not)

ii)Its a dog but its brown-(why should it be?)

iii)Its a dog and its brown (normal possible trait)

**THEMATIC RELATIONS**

Agent, patient, theme, source, recipient, goal, instrument,benefactive,experiencer, stimulus

* The agent is the actor/doer in an event. The agent is connected to the notions of decision, intent and responsibility. Patient is the thing an action is done to.

Pamela tapped the desk.

* **Theme- of motion** refers to the thing which is moved in an even.

*Pamela rolled the ball to the wall.*

*Water poured out of the tank.*

*Murage taught the boys Kiswahili-* the motion here is metaphorical, virtual or abstract.

**Theme of change of state.** – a thing undergoes the change of state in the course of an event. *John boiled the milk. John burned the paper.*

* **The goal** is the thing towards which movement is directed
* **Recipient** receives sth which is transmitted or transferred.

*Sarah gave the parcel to Ann.*

* The **source** is the thing away from which movement is directed.

*Water poured out of the tank.*

* the **instrument** we use as a tool or means usually marked by the preposition ‘with’ and the **benefactive** for who’s direct benefit, something is done.

*He butchered the toast with a knife*

*George buttered a piece of toast for Esther.*

* the **experiencer** is the entity which has an emotional or psychological state or experience. The **stimulus** is the thing which triggers or is the target of an experiencer’s psychological response.

*Eve is afraid of rodents*

*Mary* was amazed at the difference

**SENSE RELATIONS**

a**)Synonymy**-means sameness of meaning. There are so many synonyms in English due to interaction with Chinese, Japanese and French. We can ascertain synonymy through the following ways;

i) Some synonyms belong to the same dialect of the same language e.g. gas-petrol

ii)Stylistic choices-when made in speeches e.g a nasty smell(ordinary conver), ‘orrible stik(peers) obnoxious effluvium(register oriented) etc

iii) Different emotive meanings attached to given words e.g politicians versus statesman,liberty vs freedom.

iv) Words have meanings that tend to overlap e.g govern-control, direct.mature- adult, ripe, perfect

**test for synonymy**

* **by substitution-** true synonyms are mutually interchangeable

*deep-profound* one has a more general application

b**)Hyponymy**-this carries the property of inclusion where one thing is included with another e.g lion and elephant are included in mammals/animals so that a mention of one includes the other.Hyponymy points to a class of membership e.g animal is supper-ordinate term while mammal is a hyponym. Same to oak is hyponym of tree.

Lion, dog cow are co-hyponyms of the of the superordinate animal. Meaning inclusion.

Animal, reptile, bird are supper-ordinates of lion, snake and sparrow.

c**) Polysemy**

Some words in eng have different meanings e.g flight

-passing through the air

-unit of the air force

-power of flying

-a set of staircases

d)**Homonymy**-Is the case where several words have the same shape of meanings e.g sole

-sole of shoes and sole of fish

Pupil-eye,school

Found-establish,past tense of find

Homonyms have the same form but differ in meaning.

e**)Antonymy**-are words which have opposite in meaning.Comparisons can be done in degrees of quality by grading e.g

-Is Atieno as beautiful as Miriam?

-Atieno is more beautiful than Miriam.The comparison captured in the 2 sentences depends on the degree of variation observed by the speaker

Shallow-deep

f)**Meronymy**-is the part of relation where phenomenon is analysed into its parts for example. An object to which arm and body refer are in a part-whole relation. Arm is a meronym of body-their rship is meronymy.

plant-leaf,bud,stem,root

day-day,night

night-twilight,evening,night

**CATEGOREMATIC EXPRESSIONS** (semantic laws) have independent meaning and must be in a sentence. Their meanings can be looked out in the dictionary and they provide opportunities for description and categorization. They include noun, adjectives and verbs.

**SYNCATEGOREMATIC EXPRESSIONS** are former function words. They perform grammatical roles in a context that they occur. They do not have independent paraphrasable meanings of their own. They modify categorematic expressions and they include conjunctions, connectors, articles, prepositions.

**TRUTH PROPERTIES**- words are used to talk about situations, they can be used to express truth or falsity. Semantics is not concerned with explaining empirical truth and falsehood but explaining sentences that are linguistically true or false.

**DIMENSIONS OF MEANING**

* **Denotation and sense**

cobtwn word and its meaning.denotation also works by observation.

**Ostensive definition-** defining sth by pointing at it.

Words can also be defined by paraphrasing (using many words to define). Sense to sense matching of an expression.

**Odgen and Richards (1923) semiotic triangle.** Name(word) assotiation (concept/idea) reference (object (object/thing)

* **Connotation**

Connotation is a highly emotive term. Expressions whose meaning have been removed from linguistic meaning. The meanings are derived from attitudes steriotypes, perceptions opinions. *Tom is a dog, jane is abitch* are expressions that have comparison of attributes. Reference is the actual things talked about.

**MEANING OF MEANING**

* **Analytical approaches** (referential definition of meaning) in which meaning is resolved into its main semiotic components for example symbol, thought and referent. Three components relate in an integrated format to lead to a meaning. The symbol signals a thought through association and the idea invokes a mental picture of the referent. There is no direct link btwn the symbol and its meaning except through the thought. The meaning so arrived at maybe actual or mental.
* **Operational approach** (contextual defn of meaning) its underlined argument is that the meaning of a word depends on what a man does with it not what he says about it.

**APPROACHES TO THE SUDY OF MEANING**

* **Denotation theories-** the meaningfulness of language amounts to its ‘aboutness’(language explains and describes the world) therefore lang conveys information abt reality.

There may not be any one to one co-relation btwn names and the things they refer. People are not named according to their personality trait.

Word refer to both actual and hypothetical things around us, hence actual worlds and possible worlds. For every actual denotation, there is a possible denotation.

**THEORIES OF MEANING**

**1. MENTALIST THEORY**

This theory is used to analyse linguistic representation using the mental representation. This theory can be appropriate to philosophers who wish to analyse to analyse or explain some contents in a non- representational outlook. Mentalists under this theory aim to explain nature meaning using mental states of language users. These theories can be divided basing on which mental state they consider to be relevant in meaning determination.

The best view on this theory is by a philosopher known as Grice since it explains meanings of expressions in terms of communicative intentions of language users. We can therefore discuss critically Grecians view in broad for us to understand mentalist theory at large.

**GRICEAN PROGRAM**

This program has two main objectives as follows;

a) Facts about what speakers say in relation to the situation ahead of them.

b) Facts about what speakers mean by their utterances in terms of their intentions.

These two main ideas are used to reduce meaning of contents from the speakers intentions. For one to clearly understand this approach, they should first be clear on distinction between meaning or content of linguistic expressions and what the actual speakers imply by these expressions. For instance let’s look at the following sentences;

a) When a diplomat says ‘**yes’** he means ‘**perhaps’.**

b) When he says ‘**perhaps**’ he means ‘**no’.**

c)When he says ‘**no’** he is not a diplomat.

From these three sentences, they remind us a lot of emphasis is involved in what one does rather than what they mean by using those words. The words ‘**yes**’, ‘perhaps’ and ‘no’ have a perfectly identifiable meaning.

However, these sentences can elicit different things in different circumstances. These in what speakers mean when uttering those words, the particular circumstances of their utterance, their intentions, actions and what they manage to communicate.

Grice thought that the speakers meaning can be analysed basing on their communicative intentions to cause varying beliefs among their audience. For instance, one can say ‘You are standing on my foot’ This means i intend that you hear the words am saying and you believe that you are actually standing on my foot. This shows that the speakers meaning cant be just a matter of intending to cause a certain belief but the belief should be caused in a certain way.

Therefore, Grice intention was to make one realise that they are not only supposed to believe what the speaker has said but also do so basing on their knowledge on the speakers intention.

**MEANING, BELIEF AND CONVENTION**

An important alternative to the Grecian analysis which shares the Grecian commitment to a mentalist analysis of meaning in terms of the contents of mental states is the analysis of meaning in terms of beliefs rather than the speaker’s intentions.

However, regularities in meaning and belief are not sufficient to ground analysis of meaning. Hence, mentalists have sought to analyse meaning in terms of conventions governing such regularities.

**Meaning as images**

Going by the notion that ideas are not mental images might not work for all common nouns and verbs.For instance, if one forms an image of a dog i will be of some particular species. A similar case occurs with th verb **kick, kicker, which leg was used for kicking and the kind of thing being kicked.**Kicked in general, mental images are just not abstract enough to be meanings of common nouns and verbs.

**Meaning as concepts**

Concepts are mentally represented categories of things. They might be too specific in that various speakers’ concepts of ideas might include information that is too specific to the way they developed the concept but is not part of the related word.

Some instances of a concept are more typical than others; e.g. chairs are more typical than furniture. Concepts work as meaning for some words such as common nouns, adjectives and verbs. The case is not true for words that do not have clear conceptual content e.g. trees. It’s also not what concept would be assigned to a sentence though sentences are clearly meaningful hence it is a theory of restricted portion of the language.

The advantage of having meaning as concepts is that it does not equate meaning with either denotation or ideas of concepts. Also marks a sharp distinction between semantics of words and phrases and the semantics of the whole sentences.

**Meaning as sense**

According to Frege (1892) sense refers to expression with denotations they have. He proposed that whole sentences have senses i.e. for declarative sentences the sense is the conditions that make the sentence true i.e. sentences truth conditions comes out because understanding the sentence using your senses makes the information appear true to you.

**WEAKNESSES OF THIS THEORY**

This theory only places excessive focus on the efforts of a listener to discover the speaker’s intentions. This is not appropriate for linguistic communication hence won’t sufficiently provide enough information as expressed by Christopher Ganker an American philosopher.

**2. BEHAVIOURAL THEORY OF MEANING**

This theory was developed by **John B. Watson** and he argues that to analyse the concept of meaning, some philosophers suggest the meaning of an utterance is the response it evokes in an audience in particular given context.

This shows that meaning can be identified with regularly evoked behavioural responses. Charles Morris, another philosopher who assumed that every meaningful expression is a sign for something which can be elaborated to be more clear basing on dispositions to respond rather than the actual overt responses. According to him, meaning is identified when considering the effect of responses produced by an utterance from the speaker on a given topic of study or discussion. Another philosopher B. F skinner an American psychologist proposed that the correct semantics for a natural language refers to two main things as follows;

**a)** The meaning of an expression as uttered on a particular occasion i.e. behaviour stimulus that produces the utterance.

**b)** The behavioural response that the utterance produces or a combination of both. Therefore for instance, the meaning of the word **FIRE** as uttered on a particular occasion might include running or calling for help. This can mean on a single occasion it’s possible that not everyone who hears **FIRE** will respond by running or calling for help. The behaviourist account is committed to the view that the meaning of **FIRE** is different from the meaning of Fire depending on the occasion and the kind of audience addressed.

In addition, the behaviourist account like the ideational one subject to objection based on its composition. Suppose someone’s body recoils when he hears brown cow but not when he hears either brown or cow alone. The meaning of brown cow which constitutes recoiling is hence not determined by or predicted from the meaning of brown cow.

**WEAKNESSES OF THIS THEORY**

**a)** This theory doesn’t leave room for the relation between a sentence and the sorts of things it’s used to talk about. Moreover, it doesn’t clearly explain what has been going on before the particular statement or what will occur in future. It only focuses on the current issues alone.

**b)** Also the behaviour described doesn’t always carry with it mental states hence it ceased to be a focus on philosophical ideas.

**3. USE THEORY OF MEANING**

This theory was developed by Ludwig Wittgenstein who was originally an artificial language philosopher who believed that meaning of a word is related to its use in language.

He also said that the meaning comes out clearly depending only in the context of a proposition has a name meaning. Meaning in a natural language was seen as primarily a question of how the speaker uses words within the language to express their intention. This close examination of natural language proved to be a powerful philosophical technique to determine in semantics as a field of study.

**WEAKNESSES OF THIS THEORY**

This theory is only committed to the notion that language is a public phenomenon and hence disputes private language. These claims are not valid according to jerry Fodor a philosopher because he thinks it’s necessary to create the language of thought which must require the inclusion of private language.

In conclusion, we can say that, meaning can be interpreted in various ways whether through images, senses or concepts with regard to theories discussed above. Theories of meaning stand as different entities and the main idea is now how one is able to come out with an appropriate meaning with regard to the contexts or the situation of use.