



МІНІСТЕРСТВО ОСВІТИ І НАУКИ УКРАЇНИ  
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ФАКУЛЬТЕТ ІНОЗЕМНОЇ ФІЛОЛОГІЇ  
ТА СОЦІАЛЬНИХ КОМУНІКАЦІЙ



## СОЦІАЛЬНО-ГУМАНІТАРНІ АСПЕКТИ РОЗВИТКУ СУЧАСНОГО СУСПІЛЬСТВА

МАТЕРІАЛИ ВСЕУКРАЇНСЬКОЇ НАУКОВОЇ КОНФЕРЕНЦІЇ ВИКЛАДАЧІВ,  
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## THE WORD AS A UNIT OF MEANING. THE ROLE OF CONTEXT IN WORDS MEANING

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A unit of meaning is a word plus all those words within its contextual context that are needed to disambiguate this word to make it monosemous. A lot of research were made to study the influence of the context. They testify that there is usually in each word a hard core of relatively stable meaning and can be modified by the context within certain limits.

Modern linguists have not only placed greater emphasis context but rather broadened its scope .

The range of the term ‘context’ has been widened in several directions. Even the strictly verbal context is no longer restricted .This tendency is evident in stylistic criticism where the complete significance of can be understood in the light of the work as a whole.

Besides verbal context, the linguists pay attention to the so-called ‘context of situation’.

It means that the actual situation is of great importance but a broader view of context having the entire cultural background against which a speech – event has to be set. ”The conception of context’’, writes Malinowski ,Polish anthropologist,’ ‘must burst the bonds of mere linguistics and be carried over into the analysis of the general conditions under which the language is spoken...

The study of any language, spoken by people who live under conditions different from our own and possesses a different culture, must be carried out in conjunction with the study of their cultureand environment.’’

There are two kinds of contextual influence : those which effect any and those which effect some words more than others. Every word will derive from the context a certain determinateness which can arise in specific utterances.

Even proper names have a variety of aspects and only one of them will be relevant. For ex., only the context will show whether when speaking of Queen Victoria we are refering to the young queen advised by Lord Melbourne.

Another factor which greatly depends on the context is the emotive side of word meaning.

**Home**, for example, is one of the great emotional words. It is used in many contexts (‘Home, sweet home’; England, home and beauty’; ‘Home is the sailor, home from the sea’,}).

All words have a denotation and connotation. The denotation refers to the basic or specific meaning of a word. In contrast, connotation is an idea that is suggested by or associated with a word. For example, the word {home} is just a name of a structure, but it has connotation of a {nation, a place of warmth, comfort and affection}. It's worth to note that non-native speakers often have difficulty with connotation, while native speakers may use the words appropriately though unconsciously. Denotation and connotation are not two separate things. They are two aspects of a sign, and the connotative meaning of a word exist together with the denotative meanings. Connotation represents the various social overtones, cultural implications or emotional meanings associated with a sign. Denotation represents the explicit or referential meaning of a sign. Denotation refers to the literal meaning of a word, "the dictionary definition". For example, the name "Hollywood" connotes such things as glitz, glamour, celebrity and dreams of stardom. In the same time this name denotes an area of Los Angeles known as the center of the American movie industry.

Apart from the general influence, context also plays an important role in fixing the meaning of words which are too vague to make sense by themselves. For example, the word **do** has such a wide variety of uses it is virtually meaningless in itself. In each case, however, the definite word applied to the thing is important, because the word can influence our perceptions of the thing. Another type of ambiguity which only the context can make clear is found in words belonging to more than one word-class. This phenomenon may be seen in English due to the process known as 'conversion' when a word can pass from one class to another. For example, the word **fire** is primarily a noun, though it can be used as a verb in the meaning of 'поджигать'. The word **have** is first a verb, though it becomes a noun in 'the haves and the have-nots'. The role of context is also essential in the case of homonyms which are pronounced in the same way but spelt differently. For example, the words **sole** and **soul** where the first means 'the adjective-единственный, the fish, or the bottom of the foot' and the other – the spiritual or immortal element in a person.