

SEMANTICS IN OBEY CLOTHING T-SHIRT DISCOURSE: A STUDY OF SEMANTICS

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Abstract

In this study, it is analyzed lexical meaning in a text of written language which is applied on Obey's T-shirt. These meanings furthermore constructed descriptive interpretations. The theory used in this study is theories of lexical semantics in Mansoer Pateda (2010). Research method in this study is descriptive analysis which is conducted by using analytic approach and operational approach of lexical meaning. This approach includes meaning component segmentation and lexical meaning analysis. The result of this study which is conducted on eight product samples is that each product has its own characteristic which can be constructed through interpretation based on lexical meaning of each entity in the product. The lexical meaning which is analyzed is capable to construct meaning related to the object outside the language. Both meaning, lexical and cognitive meanings are able to construct an interpretation as a meaning representation of a text as a whole part.

Keywords: Interpretation, Lexical, Meaning, Semantics

Abstrak

Dalam penelitian ini, objek yang dibahas adalah tentang makna leksikal dalam wacana yang diaplikasikan pada produk T-shirt bermerek Obey. Makna tersebut kemudian memunculkan interpretasi yang dapat dideskripsikan. Teori yang dipakai dalam penelitian ini adalah kumpulan teori-teori yang berhubungan dengan semantik leksikal dalam buku karya Mansoer Pateda (2010). Metode yang digunakan dalam penelitian ini merupakan metode penelitian deskriptif dengan menggunakan pendekatan analitik dan pendekatan operasional makna leksikal. Pendekatan tersebut meliputi segmentasi komponen makna dan analisis makna leksikal. Adapun hasil dari penelitian yang dilakukan terhadap delapan varian produk Obey ini adalah bahwa setiap produk membawa karakteristiknya masing-masing yang mampu dideskripsikan melalui interpretasi yang diperoleh dari pendekatan makna leksikal dari setiap entitas yang ada dalam produk tersebut.

Makna leksikal yang didapat mampu membentuk makna yang berhubungan atau mengacu pada objek di luar bahasa. Kedua makna, baik makna leksikal dan makna kognitif, mampu membangun interpretasi yang kemudian dipaparkan sebagai gambaran makna wacana secara keseluruhan.

Kata kunci: *Interpretasi, Leksikal, Makna, Semantik*

Introduction

Human sometimes use language through any different media to convey their intention. T-shirt is one of those media which can be used to deliver meaning, especially if written language is applied on the T-shirt. This application of written language on a T-shirt sometimes makes us wonder about the meaning behind it. This meaning can be interpreted through study of meaning; it is related to semantics field of study. In the study of language, semantics is usually used to determine meaning and all matter related to meaning itself. One of the semantics tools which can be used to determine meaning is lexical semantics. Thus, in this study, the writer focused on lexical semantics and interpretation based on lexical meaning of each word.

This study mainly discussed about how interpretation can be delivered through lexical meaning or meaning properties. The writer used theories about semantics in Mansoer Pateda's book (2010) to answer the questions about meaning. Pateda (2010) stated that there are two kinds of methods in analyzing meaning, analytic approach and operational approach.

This study also focused on how interpretation can be delivered through analytic description about meaning. Interpretation about the meaning related to outside world is the main thing in this study.

Data Source

The data for this study were taken from *Obey's Website Catalog, Men's Graphic Tops* which are released in 2016. The data were chosen because the designs are not only consisted a written languages but also each written language delivered meaning related to object outside the language. This object can be interpreted by using meaning component in each word.

Method

This study used analytic description method. Sugiyono (2008:14) stated "Metode deskriptif analisis merupakan metode penelitian dengan cara mengumpulkan data dan kemudian data data tersebut disusun, diolah, dan dianalisis untuk memberikan gambaran masalah yang ada" Based on the theory, the first step is data collection. The data were collected from *Obey Website*

Catalog, Men's Graphic Tops. Second is data selection. From the catalog, the data which is applied a written language is selected. Third is data analysis. The data which have been selected is analyzed based on each structure, words, phrases, and sentences. In analytic approach, all of the selected data are divided into word in order to analyze lexical meaning which only can be derived from word. In operational approach, each word in the data will be applied in any possible sentences. From this, interpretation about the meaning related to outside world will be described.

Theoretical Review

This study used lexical semantics theories from Mansoer Pateda's book entitled "*Semantik Leksikal*" which has published in 2010 as a grand theory. To derived meaning, there are several methods according to Pateda. Ulmann in Pateda (2010:82) stated that meaning is related to *sense*. If anyone hear or read a kind of word, he or she will construct a concept inside his or her mind. This concept can be explained using meaning component of its word. To determine meaning of a word, Pateda (2010:86) stated that there are kind of methods: analytic approach and operational approach. Analytic approach is used to analyze meaning based on its segmentation of meaning, in other word; each property of meaning which is related to the word is described. Operational approach is used to construct a contextual meaning if word is applied in several possible sentences.

a. Analytic Approach

According to Pateda (2010:86) analytic approach is focused on meaning segmentation of word. For example: word *father* has meaning properties such as:

- A man
- Has a kid
- Has a wife
- Working
- Probably has a mustache
- Own a house

The example clearly describes what a word has as its meaning property. These properties consist in such word and also related to something beyond its word itself.

b. Operational Approach

According to Pateda (2010:86) operational approach is focused on how the word appeared in several possible sentences. For example:

- My father is a banker.
- I live in my father's house

The word will make no sense in certain sentences like:

- My father has no head.
- My father is a woman.

Those several examples show how a word can be delivered a meaning, especially contextual meaning, if the word is applied into several possible sentences. Sense of meaning can be derived from several sentences which are acceptable related to the outside world.

Pateda (2010:119) also stated that there are several type of meanings. These meanings are concluded based on reference of each word. In this study, there are two kind of meaning which is used to construct descriptive interpretation: lexical meaning and cognitive meaning.

Lexical Meaning

According to Pateda (2010:119) lexical meaning is a stand alone, static meaning and it can be obtained from dictionary. By static it means that the meaning of a word cannot be changed otherwise it is applied into a sentence. For example word *hill* from *Merriam-Webster E-Dictionary* (2017) mean (i) *a usually rounded area of land that is higher than the land around it but is not high as a mountain* (ii) *an area of sloping ground on a road, path, etc.* (iii) *a pile of something.*

Cognitive Meaning

Cognitive meaning according to Shipley in Pateda's book (2010:109) is meaning which has a relation between word and its concept outside the meaning. Furthermore, Shipley stated that cognitive meaning has its own distinctions which are:

- The relation between word and the object which is called denotation, and
- The relation between word and its certain characteristic which is called connotation.

According to Pateda (2010:109) cognitive meaning is a meaning which are derived from how human thing and it is related to human perspective regarding a word.

Findings And Discussions

Data 1. Word Level



Chaos, Dissent, Propaganda, Obey

From the picture it can be seen that there are several written languages which is stated *chaos*, *dissent*, *propaganda*, and *obey*. All of the written language is taken form as words. Thus, the meaning properties and lexical meaning of each word are:

	Concrete	Abstract	One person	More than one person
Chaos	-	+	-	+
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - A concept - A statement or a condition - Involved and affected more than one person 				

From these properties, the meaning of word *chaos* is related to a concept of something, it is also a condition of something and involved and affected more than one person. For it is a concept, the word *chaos* has a relation to outside world regarding a condition of something. Thus, lexical meanings of word *chaos* are:

- *complete confusion and disorder : a state in which behavior and events are not controlled by anything.*
- *the state of the universe before there were any order and before stars and planets were formed. (Merriam Webster E-Dictionary)*

	Concrete	Abstract	One person	More than one person
Dissent	-	+	-	+
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - A concept 				

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Does not have a form - Involved more than one person

From these properties, the meaning of word *dissent* is related to a concept, a behavior which has no form and also involved more than one person. The word *dissent* is related to something outside the language and has something to do with behavior or activity. Thus, lexical meanings of word *dissent* are:

- *to publicly disagree with an official opinion, decision, or set of beliefs (verb).*
- *public disagreement with an official opinion, decision, or set of beliefs (noun).*
- *law: a statement by a judge giving reasons why the judge does not agree with the decision made by other judges in a court case (noun).* (Merriam Webster E-Dictionary)

	Concrete	Abstract	One person	More than one person
Propaganda	+	+	-	+
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - A concept - It can be take a form or not - Involved more than one person 				

From these properties, the meaning of word *propaganda* is related to a concept, something that has a form or not and it involved and affected more than one person. The word *propaganda* is also related to activity which is conducted by several persons to affect other people. Thus, lexical meanings of word *propaganda* are:

- *ideas or statements that are often false or exaggerated and that are spread in order to help a cause, a political leader, a government, etc.*
- *capitalized.*
- *the spreading of ideas, information or rumor for purpose of helping or injuring an institution, a cause, or a person.*
- *ideas, facts, or allegations spread deliberately to further one's cause or to damage an opposing cause; also : a public action having such an effect.* (Merriam Webster E-Dictionary)

	Concrete	Abstract	One person	More than one person
Obey	-	+	-	+
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - A concept - Does not have a form - Involved more than one person 				

From these properties, the meaning of word *obey* is related to a concept, an activity which is involved and affected more than one person. The word *obey* is related to something beyond a language involving some regulations, laws, and advices. Thus, lexical meaning of words *obey* are:

- *to do what someone tells you to do or what a rule, law, etc., says you must do.*
 - *to follow the commands or guidance of. (iii) to conform to or comply with.*
- (Merriam Webster E-Dictionary)

From this whole data we can infer that there are some messages regarding the written language on the T-shirt. These messages can only be delivered through interpretation. Thus, the interpretation regarding this whole text of *Obey* T-shirt is a sequence of events. This sequence can be interpreted by word *chaos*, *dissent*, *propaganda*, and *obey* as a whole part of concept. The text also wanted to tell reader about the characteristic of a product which is produced by *Obey Clothing Company*. This characteristic is related to such statement regarding government, society or something which is involved and affected many people.

Data 2. Phrase Level



From this data, it can be seen that the phrase says “*Permanent Vacation*”. There are two words which construct the phrase, *permanent* and *vacation*. Thus, the meaning properties and lexical meaning of each word are:

	Conceptual	State	Static	Dynamic
Permanent	+	+	+	-
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - a concept - a state or statement - static or stay the way it is 			

Permanent means (i) *lasting or continuing for every long time or forever : not temporary or changing.* (ii) *continuing or enduring without fundamental or marked change.* (Merriam Webster E-Dictionary)

From these properties the word *permanent* related to concept of something, a statement, and it has a quality of static, it related to something that cannot be changed or moved.

	Activity	State	One Person	More Than One Person
Vacation	+	+	+	+
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - an activity - a statement - involved one or more than one person 				

Vacation means (i) *a period of time that a person spends away from home, school, or business usually in order to relax or travel.* (ii) *the number of days or hours per year fro which employer agrees to pay workers while they are not working.* (iii) *a time when schools, colleges, and universities are closed.* (iv) *a respite or a time of respite from something.* (v) *a period spent away from home or business in travel or recreation.* (Merriam Webster E-Dictionary)

From these properties, the word *vacation* is related to activity, a state of something and it is involved one or more than one person. The *vacation* also related to something beyond the language which refers to a statement of an activity involving one or more than one person.

The phrase *Permanent Vacation* is related to something which refers to an activity or a statement. This activity or statement has quality of static, eternal, and it cannot be changed or moved. It can be interpreted as something eternal which is going forever, and the closest interpretation to eternity is the life after death. Thus, this phrase wants to represent the concept of death through words *permanent* and *vacation*.

Data 3. Sentence Level



It can be seen from the data that the text is a sentence. The sentence says “*Behave Yourself*”. This sentence’s type is imperative sentence. The sentence consists two words, *behave* and *yourself*. Thus, the meaning properties and lexical meaning of each word are:

	Conceptual	Order	One Person	More than one person
Behave	+	+	+	+
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - a concept - has quality of norm - involved one or more than one person - affected more than person 				

Behave bermakna (i) *to act in an acceptable way : to act properly.* (ii) *to act in a particular way.* (iii) *to function, react, or move in a particular way.* (iv) *to manage the actions of (oneself) in pasticular way.* (v) *to conduct (oneself) in a proper manner.* (Merriam Webster E-Dictionary)

From these properties, the word *behave* is related to concept of something, an order which is involved and also affected one or more than one person. The word *behave* is also related to something which represents a conceptual order, or something imperative.

	Human		One person	
Yourself	+		+	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - related to human - has a reference - involved one person 				

Yourself bermakna (i) *the person that is being addressed*. (ii) *that identical one that is you – used reflexively, for emphasis, or in absolute constructions*. (Merriam Webster E-Dictionary)

From these properties, the word *yourself* is related to something, probably human, and it has a reference which is involved one person. The word *yourself* refers to someone, or something.

The imperative sentence clearly states that someone has to act properly. The word *behave* is an order which is said by someone to the other. This other people is represented by the word *yourself*. In the other word, this sentence wants to tell reader or listener to act properly, or in this case, behave.

Conclusions

From the data which is analyzed, we can infer that every word carried its own properties of meaning which can be interpreted as a whole concept of the text. From the data, the sequence which is delivered through four words is describing something related to a statement, a condition. This condition is related to government, society, or something which is involved and affected many people. Interpretation about this statement is derived by lexical meaning of each word.

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