# COMPONENTIAL ANALYSIS OF VERBS OF FIVE SENSES

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**Abstract.** The objective of this study was to find out the semantic components of verbs of sight, hearing, smell, taste, and touch sense. The method of this study is the descriptive qualitative research based on a library study. Data analysis was attempted using componential analysis. The findings suggest that componential analysis is very useful to a group of related words which may differ from one another only by one or two components, and each investigated verb has different semantic components even though they have similar meaning. Conclusions suggest that the essentials of the findings of this inquiry can be used to contribute to the development of English language teaching.

Keywords: componential analysis, semantic components, verbs of five senses

## A.    INTRODUCTION

Dealing with English teaching and learning, there are some difficulties faced by students in understanding English vocabulary. These difficulties arise because they learn them through word-to-word translation, from English into Indonesian words and vice versa. They just take them for granted. They believe that every English word can be translated into Indonesian one with exactly the same meaning, but it is not. The meaning components of an English word are not always exactly the same as its Indonesian translation. It also happens to English synonymous words whose meaning components are not always exactly the same. That is why this research needs to be done to uncover the different meaning components of synonymous words. The result of this research surely provided something valuable for teachers of English in differentiating English synonymous words. Therefore, there is the need for a technique in presenting the meaning of words without referring to the mother tongue. The technique must be separate from the meaning itself, present other aspects of word meanings. The technique described in this research is called Componential Analysis. It allows the meaning of word to be distinguished by decomposing it into different pieces called, "componential parts". Componential analysis can be very useful for differentiating words that are very similar in meanings. The writer assumes that as the English foreign language learners, there are still many mistakes that students make in selecting words in their communication, either oral or written ones. Most of them assume that every word that has similarities refers to the same thing. However, they forget that communication has one problem that is in understanding of communication.

Actually, not all of the similar words refer to the same thing and the same meaning. The two words are synonymous but they are not exactly the same in meaning. They are only partial synonyms, not absolute ones. As non-native speakers, students usually make some mistakes in selecting suitable words especially verbs of five senses to express the actions. Verbs of five senses (*sight, hearing, smell, taste, and touch*) are the common verbs used in our daily lives. In order to avoid the mistakes that the English language learners do in selecting the appropriate verbs of five senses, the writer does this research entitled "Componential Analysis of Verbs of Five Senses". The analysis can ease the students to understand the meanings of words. However, it is not easy to make a list with complete semantic features. It needs much time, care, and effort to do a good analysis, especially to verbs of five senses (*sight, hearing, smell, taste, and touch*). It seems to the writer that many Indonesian students get confused in understanding about the classification of verbs of five senses. The teacher assumes that they are not able to differentiate one from others precisely, both in meaning and in their classification. These reasons underline the ideas of carrying out the analysis concerning the semantic components in English especially components of verbs of five senses.

## B.    RESEARCH METHOD

The method of this study is the descriptive qualitative research based on a library study. Lambert (2012:255) state that the goal of qualitative descriptive research is a comprehensive summarization, in everyday terms, of specific events experienced by individuals so group of individuals. It is concerned with conditions or relationships that are held, processes that are going on, effects that are evident, or trends that are developing. Further, Moleong (2007:11) states that descriptive qualitative is used when the data is collected by the researcher consist of words and pictures instead of numbers. In this study, the writer described the semantic components of verbs of five senses without giving any treatments to anybody or to anything so that the writer used the descriptive qualitative method.

The data for this analysis were verbs of five senses taken from thesaurus and consulted them to three dictionaries, they were Oxford, Longman, and Merriam Webster Online Dictionaries. The data of this study were obtained from the documents or literatures that were related to the research. The data were taken from relevant books, dictionaries, and thesaurus. The key terms that had to be operationally defined were componential analysis, and verbs of five senses.

1) Componential analysis refers to the analysis of the meaning prosperities of the words under the investigation.
2) Verbs of five senses refer to the verbs that are related to the five senses, *sight, hearing, smell, taste,* and *touch*.

In analyzing the data, some relevant steps are deliberated as follows:

1)    Finding the verbs of five senses by using thesaurus.

2)    Describing and classifying the verbs related to five senses by consulting three English dictionaries.
3)    Making the semantic features of each verb related to the five senses.
4)    Giving the marker '+' to signalize that word present the feature and marker '-' uses to signalize that the word does not present the feature.
5)    Describing the semantics components of verbs of five senses investigated.
6)    Concluding the findings.

Parera (2004:159) there are three procedures to find out the meaning components of words. The steps are specified as follows:

1.   Choose some words that we assume that they have semantically relation.
2.   Find out the analogies among the words.
3.   Categorize semantic components or semantic decomposition based on the analogies that are related before.

We can use componential analysis in finding out the different forms of synonymous words. Actually, the words which are synonym is related each other. However they are not always having the same meaning components. The similarity of the synonymous words is not one hundred percent similar because the similarities are not absolute. Furthermore, the two words are similar in not all components of meanings, but only some components of meaning. There must be at least one or more different components of meaning.

## C.    FINDINGS AND DISCUSSIONS

### Findings

After reviewing all the theories that were related to this study, the writer analysed the investigated verbs of five senses based on Parera's theory which had already been explained before. The writer had chosen the verbs of five senses. The first step was doing selection to the verbs which had close relation to the sight sense, hearing sense, smell sense, taste sense, and touch sense. In this case, the writer used thesaurus for identifying the verbs of five senses. The writer consulted the verbs to the dictionaries in order to find out whether the verbs had relation to the five senses or not. The writer used three dictionaries; they are (1) *Longman Dictionary, (2) Oxford Dictionary, and (3) Webster Dictionary Online*. The writer classified the verbs which had relation to the five senses based on the definitions of the verbs in the dictionaries. For the first step, the writer found out that the investigated verbs of five senses. They are noted as follows:

**Table 1. List of Verbs of Five Senses**

| No. | Verbs of Sight Sense | Verbs of Hearing Sense | Verbs of Smell Sense | Verbs of Taste Sense | Verbs of Touch Sense |
|-----|---------|---------|--------|--------|--------|
| 1. | Look | Hear | Smell | Taste | Touch |
| 2. | Observe | Catch | Sniff | Discern | Stroke |
| 3. | watch | Overhear | Reek | Savor | Feel |

| 4. | see | Hearken | Stink | Eat | Handle |
|----|-----|---------|-------|-----|--------|
| 5. | behold | Listen | | Bite | Finger |
| 6. | view | | | Nibble | Pat |
| 7. | regard | | | Drink | Fondle |
| 8. | eye | | | Sip | Tap |
| 9. | gaze | | | | Caress |
| 10. | contemplate | | | | Impress |
| 11. | examine | | | | |
| 12. | inspect | | | | |
| 13. | scrutinize | | | | |
| 14. | scan | | | | |
| 15. | survey | | | | |
| 16. | stare | | | | |
| 17. | glare | | | | |
| 18. | gawk | | | | |
| 19. | glance | | | | |
| 20. | peep | | | | |
| 21. | peek | | | | |
| 22. | peer | | | | |
| 23. | gawp | | | | |
| 24. | eyeball | | | | |

The second step was to find out the semantic features of each verb. Then, the writer gave plus (+) sign for appropriate feature, minus (-) sign for inappropriate one and (±) sign for the verb has no clear distinction. The findings of this procedure include the following discussions:

   (1) Semantic components of verbs of sight sense
   (2) Semantic components of verbs of hearing sense
   (3) Semantic component of verbs of smell sense
   (4) Semantic component of verbs of taste sense
   (5) Semantic component of verbs of touch sense.

*Discussion*

Through three careful procedural steps of analysis, componential analysis has been a useful approach in determining the meaning of a word. From the analysis, it was found different numbers of semantic components or features for every verb in one sense. It means that every verb in each sense has different semantic components even though they have the same meaning. Notice that through componential analysis, it showed that every verb in one sense has similar meaning. They have the central component called common component and can be differentiated through diagnostic components of the word. It is proved that the semantic components make the verbs different one another. Furthermore, Jackson (2013:91) states that componential analysis has helpful part in contributing to the description of meanings of words. Some contributions that play by componential analysis are to understand synonymy, to establish degrees of synonymy, to understand antonymy, to understand the sense relation of hyponymy, and to help

translator to produce accurate translation. It is proved that the findings of this study can be useful in English teaching and learning activities. For example, for writing purposes, componential analysis is very useful for presenting vocabulary in sets of closely related words.

The words that seem similar are not always having similar components of meaning. By using componential analysis, we can know the words with their appropriate features, such as the word *look* and *see*. The words are commonly used in various situations and thus make *look* suitable for seeing a certain direction with an effort. During a writing task, for example, students may look at the words *look* and *see*. In the dictionaries, they will find the same meaning of *look* and *see*. However, it will be different when we analyse the two words by using componential analysis. Of course, the teacher especially English teacher should know the differences between them. In other words, the componential analysis is very useful for writing skill.


## D.    CONCLUSION AND SUGGESTION

### *Conclusion*
1. It is concluded that verbs of sight sense have common semantic component *to look* and there are thirty-three diagnostic components. They are noted as follows:
    1) naturally
    2) intentionally
    3) quickly
    4) for a short time
    5) for a long time
    6) for a longer period of time
    7) carefully / seriously
    8) with attention
    9) with a long concentration
    10) constantly / steadily
    11) through a concealed location
    12) impolitely
    13) by stealth / secretly / furtive
    14) in anger / fury
    15) in curiosity
    16) in surprise / with amazement
    17) in wonder / love
    18) with mouth opened
    19) wide-eyed
    20) with eyes partly closed
    21) see a certain direction
    22) with difficulty / strain
    23) critical inspection / as investigating
    24) distrustfully
    25) without being seen

26) quietly / in a calm
27) to find problem
28) without a purpose
29) to follow someone/something moving away
30) looking at something impressive / remarkable
31) through a hole / small place
32) without realizing that you are doing it
33) with a great care / broadly
34) to view in general way
35) to make decision / judgment
36) thinking about what you see
37) making sure the thing is up too proper standard
38) to search something
39) to know more about something

1. The verbs of hearing sense have common semantic component *to perceive the sound* and there are seven diagnostic components. They are noted as follow:
   1) perceiving sound
   2) being natural / coming automatically
   3) hearing by chance / unintentionally
   4) hearing with effort / intentionally
   5) getting or knowing something / information
   6) hearing without speaker's intention
   7) paying attention
   8) hearing with a view to obey

2. The verbs of smell sense have common semantic component *to detect odor* and there are nine diagnostic components. They are noted as follow:
   1) being natural / coming automatically
   2) need effort
   3) having pleasant odor
   4) having unpleasant odor
   5) having very bad odor
   6) in a short breath
   7) making the sound
   8) as investigating
   9) repeatedly

3. The verbs of taste sense have common semantic component *detect*ing flavor and there are seven diagnostic components. They are as follow:
   1) taking liquid
   2) taking food
   3) usually repeatedly
   4) seizing with teeth
   5) putting small amount of food
   6) detecting with eyes
   7) checking flavor by smelling
   8) chewed

9)  quickly
10) using the front teeth

4.  The verbs of touch sense have common semantic component *physical contact* and there are eighteen diagnostic components. They are as follow:
1)  once
2)  repeatedly
3)  using hand
4)  using finger
5)  hand's moving
6)  quickly
7)  slowly
8)  giving comfort / showing affection
9)  having physical contact with someone
10) making contact with your own body
11) often nervously
12) do not aware that you are doing it
13) in a loving way / in sexual way
14) getting someone's attention
15) pressing something
16) holding in the hand
17) moving something
18) erotically

## *Suggestion*

The findings of this study would be a source to the teachers of English to know the verbs of five senses and able to differentiate among them. These findings should be applied to the class to teach the English language learners about the verbs better and more accurately.

## E.    REFERENCES

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