The Semantic Features on English Synonymous Nouns of "Idea"

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Abstract

This study is aimed to see the use of distribution of the English synonymous noun "Idea", finding the meanings of each word as well as explaining the semantic features in each synonymous word. The English synonymous nouns "Idea" are belief, notion, opinion, plan, and thought. The related data were collected from COCA using Corpus method with a concordance technique. Meanwhile, qualitative and quantitative method was used to analyze the data. The result of the analysis shows that Idea is most frequently used, then followed by plan, thought, opinion, belief, and notion. In terms of the semantic features, there are ten features on content; they are: suggestion, strong feeling, confidence/trust, assumption, impression, not a fact, judgment, detail, arrangement, and politics. In the circumstance point of view, there are three features, they are formal, common, and suddenly. Furthermore, in the reason there are 4 features, which are something/someone that has been highly trusted, uncertain and there are many options, something without doubt and well planned, and need a clear or scientific explanation.

Keywords: *Semantic features, Synonyms, Nouns*

Abstrak

Penelitian ini bertujuan melihat distribusi penggunaan kata bersinonim "Ide", mencari makna kata-kata tersebut, dan menjelaskan fitur-fitur semantik yang terkandung dalam masing-masing kata. Kata-kata bersinonim "Ide" itu ialah keyakinan, gagasan, pendapat, rencana, dan pemikiran. Data yang berhubungan dengan kata-kata bersinonim itu dikumpulan dari COCA menggunakan metode Corpus dengan teknik konkordansi. Sementara, dalam menganalisa data menggunakan metode kuantitatif dan kualitatif. Hasil analisis menunjukkan bahwa kata Ide adalah kata yang paling sering digunakan, selanjutnya diikuti oleh kata rencana, pemikiran, pendapat, keyakinan, dan gagasan. Dalam segi fitur-fitur semantik, terdapat 10 fitur dalam konten, yaitu: saran, keyakinan, kepercayaan, anggapan, kesan, bukan fakta, penilaian, detail, persiapan, dan politik. Dalam sudut pandang keadaan terdapat 3 fitur, yaitu: resmi, umum, dan mendadak. Selanjutnya, terdapat 4 fitur dalam alasan, yaitu: sesuatu/seseorang yang sudah sangat dipercaya, hal yang tidak pasti dan terdapat banyak pilihan, sesuatu yang tidak diragukan dan terencana dengan baik, dan sesuatu yang membutuhkan penjelasan jelas atau ilmiah.

Kata kunci: *Fitur-fitur semantik, Sinonim, Kata Benda*

1. Background of the Study

Language is one of the most important part of human life, because with language we can be able to have communications with other people. We use language for everything we do,

anywhere and anytime. That makes language and communication play important roles in human life. When people communicate, some of them are informers and the others are receivers. In case, when the informer talked about something using a synonymous word to the receiver, the receiver often misunderstand the meaning of what informer is talking about, that is, why he or she should understand clearly the meaning of the English word *idea.* Because when someone interprets it with different things, this will cause an error in processing the meaning of a word.

Meanwhile, the meaning of a word is very important to be discussed in order not to use wrong words and certainly very useful as well for people who are learning English, so they can distinguish the meaning of one word from that of another. Semantic is generally defined as the study of meaning (Lyons, 1977:1). According to Kreidler (1998:3) semantic is systematic study of meaning, and linguistic semantics is the study of how languages organize and express meanings. To discover more clearly the difference in meaning of a word from that of other words, this study will talk about semantics.

The part of semantic study which is synonym was chosen to be analyzed. According to Hornby (2010:11515) synonym is a word or expression that has the same or nearly the same meaning as another in the same language. It can be used to discover the definition of those synonymous words. By using synonym, people become aware of the difference of a word from another word. This research analyzes the English noun *Idea* because it is one of the English nouns with many near synonyms and people often use those words for academic English.

Synonym is an interesting subject to be analyzed since a lot of people were found to make mistakes by using words with similar meaning but do not use the correct words. This study analyzes five synonyms of *Idea* whichare related and commonly used by most of the people. They are *belief, notion, opinion, plan,* and *thought.*

The semantic features were also selected to be analyzed in this study. The semantic features are used to differentiate each word used in sentences. The purpose is also helping those who study English; it can help their understanding of the definition and features of the noun. Analysing the semantic features of English nouns is still rare, moreover research in English in the noun *"Idea"* and its synonyms is also rare. Through this research, it is hoped that it can help provide necessary information about the incomplete definitions.

2. Problems of the Study

a. What distribution do the English noun of *Idea* and its synonyms have?

b. What meanings do the English noun of *Idea* and its synonyms express?

c. What semantic features characterize the English noun of *Idea* and its synonyms?

3. Aims of the Study

a. To describe the distributional use of the English noun of *Idea* and its synonyms.

b. To find out the meaning of each noun that has the meaning *"Idea".*

c. To analyze the semantic features of each synonym of the English noun of *Idea.*

4. Research Method

There are four points in the research method, they are: Data Source, Method and Technique of Collecting Data, Method and Technique of Analyzing Data, and the last is Method

and Technique of Presenting the Result of Data Analysis.

4.1 Data Source

The data in this study are nouns containing the basic meaning of "Idea". They were taken from *The Corpus of Contemporary American English* (COCA). *Corpus* was created by Mark Davies, Professor of Corpus Linguistics at Brigham Young University. It is composed of more than 450 million words from more than 160,000 texts, including 20 million words each year from 1990 to 2015. There are many sources in corpus, such as fiction, magazine, newspaper, and academic words. Corpus is one of the largest currently available corpora, and is the only publicly available corpus of American English to contain a wide array of texts from a number of genres.

4.2 Method and Technique of Collecting Data

The data were collected through documentation method by accessing https://corpus.byu.edu/coca/. The technique used in collecting data is note-taking technique. In this study, Key Word In Context (KWIC) is used in order to see the distribution of English nouns of *Idea* and its synonyms. First, the six synonymous nouns *idea, belief, notion, opinion, plan,* and *thought* were submitted into KWIC in COCA. Second, checking the [sections] menu. Hereafter, note-taking the frequency of the use of the six synonymous nouns based on genres.

4.3 Method and Technique of Analyzing Data

Quantitative and qualitative methods were applied in analyzing data. Quantitative method was used to calculate the distribution of five synonymous nouns of *"Idea"*. The meaning of each synonym of the English noun "Idea" was analyzed by using Oxford Learner's Dictionary. The semantic features were identified by looking at the definition of each synonym of the English noun "Idea" and the componential analysis. To identify these features, the following table is applied to each noun. The table has been prepared based on the meaning element of the analyzed word. The data were analyzed using the theory of componential analysis pioneered by Nida (1975).

4.4 Method and Technique of Presenting Data

Formal and informal methods were applied in presenting data. Formal method was used to see the distribution of the occurrence of data in the tables, meanwhile, informal method was used to present the data descriptively. The distribution of five synonymous nouns of *"Idea"* was presented by using chart. The meaning of each noun was presented descriptively. In addition, the semantic features of each nouns were showed by using tables.

5. Result and Discussion
5.1 The Distribution of Synonymous Nouns *Idea* and Its Synonyms

Table 5.1 The rank of the frequency in all genres

NOUNS	TOTAL
Idea	126.766
Plan	113.634
Thought	73.086
Opinion	48.197
Belief	38.858
Notion	23.545

There is a difference in amount of the use of five synonymous nouns in COCA. The noun *idea* is mostly used in COCA. The noun *idea* takes 126.766 in total of usages in spoken, fiction, magazine, newspaper, and academic English. Afterwards, followed by the noun *plan* with 113.634 usages, the noun *thought* with 73.086 usages, the

noun *opinion* with 48.197 usages, the noun *belief* with 38.858 usages, and the noun *notion* is the lowest with 23.545 usages. The sequence of the use of the English noun *"Idea"* and its synonyms from highest to lowest is *plan, idea, thought, opinion, belief* and *notion.*

Chart 5.1 The chart of the English noun *Idea* based on genres

SECTION (CLICK FOR SUB-SECTIONS) (SEE ALL SECTIONS AT ONCE)	FREQ	SIZE (M)	PER MIL
SPOKEN	33,771	109.4	289.26
FICTION	26,001	104.9	232.31
MAGAZINE	26,408	110.1	225.03
NEWSPAPER	19,898	106.0	176.10
ACADEMIC	20,688	103.4	185.69

By looking closely into all genres in the *Chart 5.1*, the English noun *idea* has the highest frequency in spoken genres. According to the chart, the English noun *idea* has 33.771 usages. It can be concluded that the English noun *idea* is mostly used in oral communication. Furthermore, in the magazine genre the English noun *idea* is one of the popular words because it has 26.408 usages. The English noun *idea* has 26.001 usages in fiction genre which means that the word is mostly used in story books or novels. Then followed by the academic genre in 20.688 usages and the less use of this word is in newspaper genre with 19.688 usages.

5.2 The Meanings of English Noun *Idea* and Its Synonyms
a. Idea

"A plan or thought especially about what to do in a particular situation." However, when the English noun *idea* is submitted to various sentences, it also has the meaning in use as follows:

"I had some *idea* of what the job would be like."

"Her family expected her to go to college, but she had other *ideas"*

*"*We're having a meeting to try to come up with *ideas* for fund-raising."

From those context, *idea* means *a suggestion in someone's mind which has been clearly think.*

5.3 The Semantic Features of English *Idea* and Its Synonyms
Table 5.2 Semantic Features of the English noun *idea*

Content	Circumstance	Reason
+Suggestion - Strong feeling -Confidence /trust -Assumption + Impression - Not a fact - Judgment + Detail +Arrangement - Politics	-Formal +Common - Suddenly	+ Something /someone that has been highly trusted. - Uncertain and there are many options. + Something without doubt and well planned. - Need a clear or scientific explanation.

The semantic features which is included in the **content** are *suggestion, impression, detail,* and *arrangement* as in the sentence *I had **some idea of** what the job would be like, Her family expected her to go to college, but she had other ideas*, and sentence *We're having a meeting to try to come up with **ideas** for fund-raising*. The semantic features that can be extracted from the sentences for **content** category are impression and suggestion. In the sentence *I had **some idea of** what the job would be like*, the English noun *idea* appears as an impression of the job, while in the sentence *Her family expected her to go to college, but she had **other idea**,* and *We're having a meeting to try to come up*

with **ideas** *for fund-raising*, the English noun *idea* serves as a suggestion or an option from others about something.

In the **circumstance** category*,* the English noun *idea* is categorized as a common situation because it can be done by many people and under any circumstances. In the **reason** category, the English noun *belief,* the English noun *idea* can be used as well for something already trusted in and well-planned.

6. Conclusions

Based on previous analysis and discussion, the following points can be drawn as conclusions: The six synonymous nouns have different frequency of use in each genre. The highest frequency of use among those synonymous nouns is *Idea* which has 126.766 frequency of use, followed by *plan* with 113.634 usages, *thought* with 73.086 usages, *opinion* with 48.197 usages, *belief* with 38.858 usages. Meanwhile, *Notion* is the lowest which has 23.545 usages from all genres.

The meanings of English noun *"Idea"* also proves that the definitions of the words are occupying the same area as the definition of other words. The meaning of a word is also determined by its use. Most words have more than one meaning and the features can be determined by looking closely at each definition of the nouns.

Looking from the semantic features, the features of the nouns can be categorized into content, circumstance, and reason. There are 10 features on content found. They are *suggestion, strong feeling, confidence/trust, assumption, impression, not a fact, judgment, detail, arrangement,* and *politics.* On the features of circumstance there are 3 features found. They are *formal, common,* and *suddenly.* And on

the reason, there are 4 features found. They are *something/someone that has been highly trusted, uncertain and there are many options, something without doubt and well planned,* and *need a clear or scientific explanation.*

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