

Refining the Comparative Analysis of Semantic Fields through Denotational Incongruencies: The case of granularity differentials

Denotational incongruencies as a contrastive phenomenon of lexical-semantic analyses have been described in various respects in cognitive linguistics (Jäkel 2001, 2003, 2010, 2014), with applications to translation issues (Jäkel 2003, 2012) as well as foreign language teaching (Jäkel 2019). The approach, which combines traditional structural semantics and field theory (Trier 1931, Lehrer 1974) with a cognitive linguistic analysis of alternative semantic construals within one and the same conceptual domain, distinguishes several subtypes of denotational incongruencies: *alternative classifications*, *granularity differential*, *staggered incongruency*, *crosspiece incongruency*, *lexical gaps* of various kinds, and *contested concepts*.

This presentation will focus on the case of *granularity differentials*, in which one of the two fields compared is split up into smaller lexical sectors than the other. The particular research question is: What can a finer granularity be based on? Drawing on exemplary analyses of granularity differentials between English and German, some results exploit sense relations such as hyponymy or meronymy (fig. 1 and 2), while others concern factors such as pragmatic context, illocution or the speaker's perspective (fig. 3 and 4). In conclusion, it will be shown that the approach can serve as a useful heuristics to learn more about subtle (or not so subtle) semantic differences between closely related languages, which again are highly informative for translation purposes as well as in the teaching and learning of foreign languages.

German	English
<i>Schnecke</i>	<i>snail</i>
	<i>slug</i>

English	German
<i>Morning</i>	<i>Morgen</i>
	<i>Vormittag</i>

German	English
<i>Küste</i>	<i>coast</i>
	<i>shore</i>

German	English
<i>fertig</i>	<i>ready</i>
	<i>finished / done</i>

Fig. 1-4: *Examples of Granularity differentials*

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