

ADJECTIVES OF «OCCURRENCE», THE LINGUISTIC EXPRESSION OF EXISTENCE¹

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Adjectives state two different types of predication, abstract and concrete, manifesting the presence of the classeme /±CONCRETE/ in their lexical meaning. Adjectives of 'occurrence' belong to the abstract predication, and state a peculiar abstract relationship of signification: they define the semantic objects predicated as to the organization of their existence or non-existence in particular structures of time, created in the expression.

1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 The meanings of adjectives

We can see two different types of meaning in the predication established by adjectives:

a) some combinations of adjective plus noun denote states of affairs with the primary function of describing something. The adjective, together with the noun, contributes to the description of particular semantic objects. For example, *red roses*, *high mountains*, *an old man*. The meaning of the combination is the contribution of the noun modified by the contribution of the adjective; and,

b) some combinations create relationships of signification with the function of relating the semantic objects denoted to certain considerations. The meaning conveyed is not descriptive but instrumental, since serves the purpose of relating. For example, *an utter fool*, *a complete victory*, *a perfect trick*. The meaning of these combinations is not the description of the particular semantic objects denoted in them (*fool*, *victory*, *trick*), but the intensification of the semantic object created in the combination. The adjective does not contribute to the description made by the noun. *He is an utter fool* means «he is a fool in the full extent of being a fool» or «he is really a fool»; *a complete victory* means «a victory in all its aspects»; *a perfect trick* can be paraphrased as «a trick with all the possibilities of achieving the purpose of tricking». There is not, thus, a description on the part of the adjective, but a relation of the semantic objects *fool*, *victory* or *trick* to their full execution as particular semantic objects. The character of these relationships of signification is instrumental².

¹ This work is part of a larger study on the adjectival predication. Adjectives are described and classified in terms of what I call the process of intellection and the determination made by the classeme /±CONCRETE/. [The Editor of *Atlantis* wishes to acknowledge the anonymous reviewers of this article for their contributions.]

² I refer this type of relationships of signification with the word «instrumental». In the abstract predication, determined by the classeme /±CONCRETE/, this type of «relational» relationships of signification are represented by the meaning conveyed by adjectives of 'intellection', 'valuation', and 'occurrence'. It is instrumental since this meaning serves other purposes (cf. below). This type of meaning has nothing to do with the distinction made by Coseriu, who distinguishes five types of meaning: *lexical meaning*, the primary configuration of facts of experience made by the language; *categorial meaning*, the way how the lexical meaning is given in a particular word; *instrumental meaning*, the meaning given by morphemes, independently from words; *structural meaning*, the meaning given by particular combinations of words; and *ontic meaning*, the existential meaning assigned to the state of affairs denoted in a sentence (cf. Coseriu 1985, 248-249; 1987, 54-58, 208, 212).

Both types of meaning in adjectives sometimes appear in the predication established by the same adjective. That is, some adjectives can be descriptive, and, at the same time, relational. For example 'old' is an adjective that is primarily descriptive but in some combinations can get certain relationships that are relational. 'Old' in *an old man* is descriptive only; in *an old friend* the contribution of the adjective is relational; and in *he is a real old friend of mine*, both types of meaning appear: 'old' is descriptive since it is intensified; and is instrumental, since it relates the semantic object *friend* to the consideration of the different relationships of signification found in friends, that is, to friendship; or to the time when that relationship takes place. The example can be paraphrased as «he has a very close relationship of friendship with me» or «he has been a friend to me for a very long time»³. 'Cruel' in the combinations *he is cruel with animals*, *his cruel action with animals*, and *his cruel knife*, is both descriptive in the three examples, especially in the first one, and instrumental in *cruel action* and *cruel knife*, since 'cruel' is properly to be applied of human beings, not of actions or knives. To understand *cruel action* it is necessary to know that actions are proper of human beings, and to understand *cruel knife* it is necessary to know that knives are instruments used by human beings, or at least, that they are used by human beings in the context of that example⁴. The relationships of signification denoted by adjectives in these examples do not aim at creating a particular semantic object, something made by the noun with all the elements taking part in the noun phrase (designation⁵, determination⁶, other adjectives), but at relating the semantic object created in the combination. These relationships of signification, however, have been extracted from the descriptive relationships of signification in the meaning of 'old' or 'cruel', respectively. The fact is that there has been an operation of relation of the semantic object conveyed in the combination, to create a new meaning. The descriptive relationships of signification in 'old' or 'cruel' have been used both to describe and to create the abstract relationships of signification appearing in the combinations above. There is, thus, a subordination of relationships of signification in the examples: the descriptive relationships of signification, which are previous, are used as the base to create the instrumental relationships of signification.

³ These combinations are called by Quirk *et al.* (Quirk *et al.* 1985, 435) *noninherent adjectives* (cf. Martínez del Castillo 1992). The relationships of signification described here are typical, as well, but with different signification, of restrictive adjectives (cf. Martínez del Castillo 1993) and intensifying adjectives (cf. Martínez del Castillo 1991b).

⁴ The application of adjectives predicating of /+HUMAN/ to human attributes or things in connection with humans is something very common in adjectives of 'human', thus creating abstract relationships of signification created out of the concrete meaning of adjectives. They have been interpreted in different ways (cf. Martínez del Castillo 1997, 32-33).

⁵ Coseriu distinguishes three levels in semantic content: *designation* (usually called by other authors *reference*), the relation of linguistic expressions to things; *meaning* or the primary configuration of facts of experience made by a language; and *sense*, the particular meaning of an expression (cf. Coseriu 1985, 247; 1992, 96). I want to refer designation as the operation of intellection implicit in the act of selecting something non-defined out of the continuum of things in the world in order to create meanings. In this sense designation is not the mere reference of expressions to things (cf. Martínez del Castillo 1997, 6.5 and 6.6).

⁶ For Coseriu (Coseriu 1982, 290-310) the operation of determination is an instrument offered by the language with the purpose of making linguistic knowledge into activity. The operation of determination consists in directing and orientating the potential designation of signs into real designation, that is, into denotation (meaning). Determination, together with designation, are the first operations implicit in the process of intellection and the creation of meanings.

But sometimes the different types of meaning in adjectives stated above are to be found in the lexical meaning of adjectives, due to the determination made by the classeme /±CONCRETE/. Some adjectives belong to the abstract predication of adjectives, and some to the concrete predication of adjectives. This distinction is based on the different meaning they convey, that is, is to be found in the different type of lexical meaning they have⁷. The differences⁸ between these two types of adjectives can be stated in the following way:

a) the states of affairs⁹ denoted in every case are different. Concrete adjectives are descriptive, abstract adjectives are instrumental. As a consequence concrete adjectives can usually be intensified, and abstract adjectives are not usually intensified¹⁰. Compare *high mountains* with *a late remark*. The first combination aims at describing something, whereas the second aims at stating the moment when the remark occurs or the position the remark occupies in a succession. In the first case the semantic object *mountains* is the point of interest, described in a particular way. The adjective contributes to the purpose of description with its meaning; in the second it is something in connection with the semantic object denoted: *remark* is put in connection with other items of the same kind; the adjective does not contribute to describe the semantic object *remark*, but to relate it; and

b) the type of designation conveyed is different: concrete adjectives have definite designation whereas abstract adjectives merely deal with semantic objects in so far as they are related. When we say, *the high mountains*, the designation of the combination is an essential part of it, since it is necessary to understand the combination. On the contrary, when we say *a late remark* the point of interest is not to refer 'remark' as something existing, but the fact that the remark came at a particular time, perhaps not at the required time. In this way we can say that concrete adjectives have definite designation and abstract adjectives indefinite designation, or at least, that the purpose of the combination where abstract adjectives participate is not to define the semantic object created, and, with it, the thing referred. The contribution of the noun in combinations with abstract adjectives, however, can give designation (*the late remark* or *his late remark*, states a particular and determined remark), but the point here is the contribution of the adjective, which aims at relating, not at describing or designating something.

In this way we can conclude, some adjectives give descriptive meaning, and some adjectives give instrumental meaning, some adjectives are determined by the classeme /+CONCRETE/, and some by the classeme /-CONCRETE/, two features in binary opposition (cf. Aarts & Calbert 1979, chapter 2). Descriptive meaning and concrete adjectives serve the purpose of stating meanings in the language; instrumental meaning of adjectives and abstract adjectives serve the purpose of relating the semantic objects, either created in the combination, or existing as meanings in the language, to other considerations. Both types of meaning in adjectives and the adjectives expressing them, have to do with the operations in the process of intellection. The existence of the classeme /±CONCRETE/ in language is a manifestation of this process of intellection, a process in human intelligence having to do with the creation of meanings and the manipulation of the things in the

⁷ cf. footnote 2 for the types of meaning by Coseriu.

⁸ cf. Martínez del Castillo 1996, 145-148.

⁹ I use the expression «state of affairs», taken from Dik (Dik 1981, chapter 3), meaning the particular re-arrangement of facts of experience denoted in a particular word or expression.

¹⁰ An adjectival predication, either if it is abstract or concrete, can be intensified in so far as it is descriptive (cf. Martínez del Castillo 1997, 2.4)

world by means of words. This process of intellection is performed through the operations of abstraction¹¹. Instrumental meaning has been formed out of descriptive meaning, through a process of abstraction. As a consequence, instrumental meaning is in a higher degree of abstraction, since it has been formed by abstracting from the descriptive relationships of meaning. Adjectives with instrumental meaning, abstract adjectives, have been abstracted from descriptive meanings, either given in the combination where adjectives participate, or existing in the language as meanings. Abstract adjectives perform certain functions which go beyond the mere description of the facts of experience through the creation of semantic objects. They are used to perform the functions of abstraction, since they relate the semantic objects created in some way or another. My assumption is that these functions performed by adjectives and manifest in adjectives (description¹², relation¹³ and abstraction¹⁴) are operations in the process of intellection. They manifest the process of intellection by human beings, and this process of intellection has created the meanings and words of a language. Human beings use these operations to understand the things in the world by creating meanings, and once created, to manipulate the things they refer¹⁵. Language gives its speakers not only the instruments of speaking with its guidelines but the instruments to transform linguistic knowledge into activity (Coseriu 1982, 290).

1.2 Operations of intellection conveyed by abstract adjectives

The combination of abstract adjective plus noun, as has been said earlier, involves the creation of a particular semantic object, and the creation of relationships of signification relating the semantic object created to certain considerations, thus, making the state of affairs denoted more complex. These two relationships of signification conveyed represent the following operations in the process of intellection:

¹¹ With this term I mean the operations involved in the creation of meanings in a language and the operations of relating the meanings created in order to understand them and manipulate the objects they refer. In this way the operations of designation and determination are of primary importance (cd. Martínez del Castillo 1997, 6.5 and 6.6).

¹² Description involves the operation of stating designation and determination. It represents the primary creation of meaning (cf. Martínez del Castillo 1997, 6.6).

¹³ The operation of relation is based on the description made. It is subsequent to description. In this way is to be considered a secondary creation of meaning.

¹⁴ The operations of abstraction are implicit in description and relation. I want to emphasize that abstraction has to be understood here as the operation of selecting something from something else. It cannot be understood in the sense spoken of by Coseriu (Coseriu 1992, 226), the selection of common features. The selection made is not logical but made freely by speakers.

¹⁵ in Martínez del Castillo 1997, the process of intellection is described with three steps in the creation of meaning: stating designation, describing the thing designated (the primary creation of meanings), and re-elaborating and putting the meanings previously created in connection with one another. These three steps involve different operations in the process of abstraction, with three degrees of abstraction: the first degree of abstraction represented in the act of designation of things, previous to all; the second degree represented by the first creation of meaning, the creation of concrete nouns; the third degree of abstraction represented in the elaboration of relationships of meaning, the creation of concrete adjectives; and the fourth degree of abstraction, the creation of both abstract nouns and adjectives. This process of intellection, manifesting the presence of the classeme /±CONCRETE/, is the base for the distinction between abstract and concrete adjectives (Martínez del Castillo 1997, 65, 6.6, 6.7 and 6.8).

a) stating designation. Designation in the combination is to be attributed, primarily, to the contribution of the noun;

b) creating the semantic object of the combination through the process of orientating the potential designation of signs to things or process of determination¹⁶. The same adjective can play different functions, depending on the determination made on it. The adjective 'Christian', for example, gives three different relationships of predication¹⁷: *she is a Christian woman* (woman is described as Christian), descriptive function; *Charity is a Christian virtue* (Charity is a kind of virtue), classifying function; and *the Christian bases of society* (bases is identified by Christian), identifying function¹⁸.

c) describing the semantic object created. The previous operations of intellection, especially the last one, contribute to describe that semantic object; and

d) relating the semantic object created with its designation and determination to relationships of signification not involved in the combination, as explained above: *to my utter amazement* (amazement denoted in the greatest extent of amazement).

The first three operations of intellection are performed in both abstract and concrete predications of adjectives. The fourth operation is performed, privately, in abstract predications of adjectives. The meaning conveyed by abstract adjectives is, thus, an elaboration made on the semantic object created. The point of interest in them is not the description of semantic objects, but the relation of them to relationships of signification, either given in the combination or existing as meanings in the language.

1.3 Kinds of abstract adjectives

The abstract predication of adjectives can be found, as explained above, both in concrete adjectives establishing both descriptive and instrumental relationships of signification, and in all adjectives determined by the classeme /-CONCRETE/, that is, in abstract adjectives. The abstract predication of adjectives in English is made up of four important groups: **adjectives of 'society'**, adjectives predicating of certain semantic objects corresponding to creations of meaning made on relationships of signification existing as meanings in the language. These adjectives may be descriptive and, thus, have definite designation, but are abstract since they are not a primary creation of meaning¹⁹; **adjectives of**

¹⁶ Coseriu (Coseriu 1982, 290-310) speaks of the operation of determination in nouns; adjectives need determination in two aspects: first, as elements of meaning. They must be defined in the dimension they convey and in the extent of that dimension; and second, as elements of predication. They must be defined in the content they denote, and in the application of their content to the content of the noun (cf. Martínez del Castillo 1997, chapter 4, for the definition of adjectives as semantic elements; and chapter 5, for the definition of adjectives as elements of predication).

¹⁷ 'Christian' is a adjective of 'society: religion'. It has a descriptive character in spite of its abstract character, but the same can be said of 'ominous', and adjective of 'occurrence: event: danger': *an ominous silence* (silence described by ominous); *an ominous situation* (a kind of situation); and *the ominous crisis affecting us* (a particularly designated crisis) (cf. Martínez del Castillo 1997, chapter 5).

¹⁸ These three functions played by adjectives have been studied by Beatrice Warren (Warren 1984a and 1984b), J. Teyssier (Teyssier 1968) and D. Bolinger (Bolinger 1967), although they do not speak of determination of adjectives (cf. Martínez del Castillo 1997, chapter 5).

¹⁹ Adjectives of 'society' have not been studied yet.

'intellection', adjectives giving a relational type of meaning relating the semantic object created in the combination to the relationships of signification in their lexical meaning. Adjectives of 'intellection' function as instruments to distinguish, define the extension of, restrict, relate, intensify, or classify; in a word to manipulate the semantic objects created or existing as meanings in the language. They represent the most characteristic abstract means of expression since they relate semantic objects, in accordance with parameters of meaning necessary to understand and, thus, manipulate the things in the world²⁰; **adjectives of 'valuation'**, adjectives determined by the axiological classeme, relating the semantic object created to the valuation made by the speaker²¹; and **adjectives of 'occurrence'**, adjectives relating the semantic objects created in the combination to the relationship of signification of existence or non-existence. All these adjectives are in a higher degree of abstraction, since they operate on semantic objects previously created²². They all represent creations of meaning subsequent to previous creations of meaning. They are elaborations by the language, and convey a type of instrumental meaning²³, since they help understand particular aspects in the meaning of a combination.

2 RELATIONSHIPS OF SIGNIFICATION CONVEYED BY ADJECTIVES OF 'OCCURRENCE'

In the state of affairs denoted by the combination, *the last bus*, we can see the following segments of information or relationships of signification:

a) the semantic object predicated is a bus, definite in itself since it is perfectly determined by the definite article. The function of the determiner is to orientate linguistic signs, primarily virtual, universal and, sometimes, ambiguous, to the reality of things in the world (Coseriu 1982, 291-308);

b) the relation of that semantic object to other items of the same class, the relation of a definite bus (the bus) to other buses, in connection of which this one occupies the last position in a succession of events repeating. In this way, the semantic object created in the predication, the bus in question, is predicated, not as a semantic object, capable to be described (the description of which is not the point of interest), but as something taking place, something considered an event;

c) the establishment of this particular bus as the point in time in connection with which the other buses are arranged. This arrangement involves considering the semantic object, that is, the bus, not as the semantic object denoted by the class of objects denoted by the noun *bus*, but as one of the essential features of that state of affairs denoted. It is not a particular and determined semantic object, that is, a particular bus, but a bus considered as to

²⁰ For adjectives of 'intellection' cf. Martínez del Castillo 1996, 143-155.

²¹ cf. Felices Lago in his doctoral dissertation, Granada 1991. Adjectives of 'valuation', apart from the determination by the axiological classeme, are determined by the classeme /-CONCRETE/, since they relate. The meaning they convey, however, is descriptive.

²² Adjectives of 'society' do not relate, but are in a higher degree of abstraction. Their abstract character is due to the type of meaning they convey, set of relationships of signification made on meanings previously existing in the language. This is something that must be studied.

²³ As it was said earlier I use this expression to mean the different types of abstract meaning conveyed by abstract adjectives or the abstract relationships of signification denoted in combinations with concrete adjectives. This instrumental meaning, on the other part, is not the instrumental meaning stated by Coseriu (Coseriu 1985, 248-249).

the essence²⁴ of buses, thus meaning, not the semantic object denoted, but the essence of it, that is, a means of transport. It is the essence of the class of semantic objects called 'bus', something with the function of public transport performed at intervals, that is, happening;

d) this arrangement of things is made backwards. The bus in the example is considered as the base of the arrangement of the other semantic objects of the same class, placed as the point of reference; the other items, the other buses, existed previously (happened). The state of affairs created is retrospective. It is structured in such a way that only an item of the many implicit in the expression is considered; the other buses are considered in relation to it. They all existed previously. The only bus of the totality of buses considered is the one coming and leaving last. The other buses came and left before the one of reference. They all took place previously, that is, occurred, happened, were considered events. They are not directly referred, but present in the expression. They are all mentioned in the content given by the adjective. They all are necessary for the intellection of the combination.

The meaning of the expression can be paraphrased as «there is a series of buses which occurred previously just as events in a succession, except for the one referred, which is the point of interest in the expression, and is the one left to perform the function of buses».

The contribution of the adjective, thus, has altered the semantic object of the combination in the following aspects:

a) it has reduced the designation of the noun. We said earlier that the semantic object *bus* was determined with the contribution of the determiner orientating the potential designation of the linguistic sign to things. That is, the determiner made real what in principle was virtual; the determiner made the linguistic sign *bus* abandon its potential designation as the essence of a class of objects to mean a concrete and real thing. And now, the adjective makes the reverse: it relates the noun to the consideration of it as something taking place, thus emphasizing its essence neglecting the designation. The relation introduced by the adjective consists in separating the essence of the semantic object, relating the semantic object to its essence as a means of transport, and neglecting the description of it and the definition of its designation. The contribution of the adjective consists in abstracting one aspect of the many that can be found in the semantic object. It is, thus, a process contrary to the process of determination, a process of indefinition, selecting only an aspect of the many possible in the set of features of the semantic object denoted;

b) the abstraction made on the semantic object denoted, that is, the selection made on the essence of the semantic object, relating it to the class of semantic objects it belongs to, involves the relation of the semantic object created in the combination to the other semantic objects of the same semantic class, not present in the expression. This device, proper of abstract adjectives, involves a relationship of signification much more complicated than the mere description of a semantic object. It involves further operations of intellection added to the ones necessary to create a semantic object, thus giving many more relationships of signification in the predication. In this way they can be considered in a higher degree of abstraction, higher than the abstraction necessary to create descriptive meanings;

²⁴ With this expression, «the essence of something», I do not mean essence in the strict sense, but as the particular relationship of signification selected in a particular set of relationships of signification.

c) the descriptive value that could be found in the semantic object has been obscured. In the example, the particular characteristics that can affect the bus so as to describe it are ignored. It does not matter if the bus in question is fast or slow, good or bad. The predication now is about something else;

d) the contribution of the adjective consists in making an arrangement of the things denoted, thus representing a typical function of the human mind in order to understand the world. A bus in itself and due to the nature of things can never be considered as taking place (an event). The language as the traditional (cf. Coseriu 1988, 48) manifestation of the process of intellection in humans, offers speakers the possibility of relating something concrete and material to relationships of signification in a different level of abstraction, thus making it appear as something it is not, an event. This device, at the same time, is manifest in the historical language as manifestation of the historicity of human beings (cf. Coseriu 1988, 70-71). The creation of meanings, and the creation of words, is something made in the daily performance of language by all speakers, in a double relation of solidarity: solidarity with those who speak in the present, and solidarity with all those who spoke the language previously. The result is the creation of a tradition of meanings, forms, words and procedures, the tradition in the technique of speaking (cf. Coseriu 1992). In that tradition adjectives of 'occurrence' have the function explained above.

3 THE PREDICATION ESTABLISHED BY ADJECTIVES OF 'OCCURRENCE'

Adjectives of 'occurrence' relate the semantic object created in the combination to the consideration of existence in two ways: they can either consider the object denoted as something happening (an event); or they can consider it as something extending in a period of time (a situation). The predication established in the combination with adjectives of 'occurrence' is based on the relation established, and the abstraction made on the semantic object. On the other hand, adjectives need definition of the dimension of meaning they convey and specification of its extent, and definition of the predicative functions they are to perform in a combination (cf. 1.2b and footnote 16). In the case of adjectives of 'occurrence', the state of affairs in the combination is completely new, since the relationships of signification in the adjective consist in the abstraction of the essence of the class of semantic objects in the noun, relating it to the other members of that class of semantic objects, with the implied reference to the organization of them as elements capable of occurring.

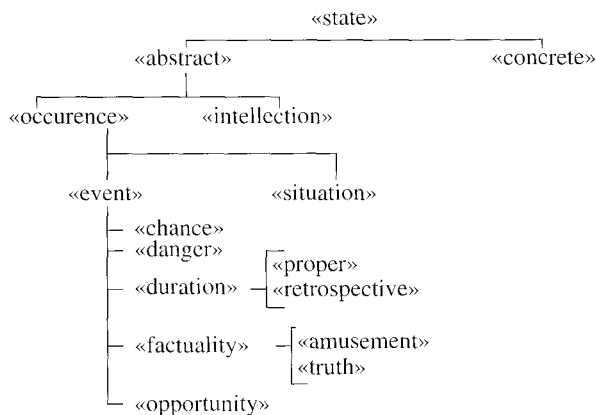
As a consequence, bearing in mind that all adjectives are static and applicable²⁵; that adjectives of 'occurrence' are abstract, since they are determined by the classeme /-CONCRETE/; and that adjectives of 'occurrence' are determined by the presence of the features /event/ or /situation/, we can establish two semantic paths²⁶ determined by the features /event/ and /situation/, respectively. The semantic path of /event/ is represented by the lexical fields of adjectives of 'chance'; 'danger'; 'duration: proper' and 'duration: retrospective'; 'factuality'. 'Factuality' is a lexical field and at the same time functions as a feature determining the lexical fields of adjectives of 'truth', and 'amusement'; and, finally,

²⁵ cf. Martínez del Castillo 1997, chapter 2.

²⁶ I use this expression taken from Aarts & Calbert 1979 to mean any sets of hierarchically ordered features determining a lexical field or lexical fields. Aarts & Calbert use this expression to refer only the hierarchy of higher-level primary features, what I have called a classeme following Coseriu (cf. Aarts & Calbert 1979, 21, footnote 2).

adjectives of 'opportunity'. The semantic path of /situation/ determines only its own lexical field, adjectives of 'situation'²⁷.

The relationships of determination and hierarchy in them can be represented as



4 THE CONCEPT OF 'OCCURRENCE' DENOTED BY ADJECTIVES, AND ADJECTIVES DENOTING IT

4.1 Adjectives of 'chance'

The relation of the semantic object created to occurrence sometimes denotes the occurrence of it in connection with the contingency of its own existence. It is the case of adjectives of 'chance'²⁸: *a random selection, the classes were random, the ordering of things was random*. The first example can be paraphrased as «there was a selection chosen without definite plan or purpose», that is, the selection existed but the way it existed was without plan or purpose; the object selected could, or could not, have been selected. The fact of selecting is related to its contingency in the way it was selected, thus denoting the occurrence of the object.

4.2 Adjectives of 'danger'

The relation of the object created to risk as a semantic feature in some adjectives creates relationships of signification denoting another type of 'occurrence'. In *drinking this water is hazardous to health*, the adjective relates the semantic object 'drinking this water' to the risk involved in its own occurrence. In *hitch-hiking is a bit dicey in the area*,

²⁷ This classification and hierarchy of adjectives has been made on the analysis of the adjectives in the *Longman Lexicon*, a total of 2100 adjectives and 5108 senses. For the justification, the process of intellection and the process of abstraction (cf. Martínez del Castillo 1997, chapter 6). This diagram represents only the semantic path 'state: abstract: occurrence'. So far this semantic path and the semantic path 'state: abstract: intellection' (cf. Martínez del Castillo 1996) have been studied. For the whole diagram of the adjectival predication and hierarchy in adjectives cf. Martínez del Castillo 1997, appendixes I and II.

²⁸ random, lucky, fortunate.

hitch-hiking is denoted with the implication of the effects it may have: if there is hitch-hiking in this area there will be danger, that is, if hitch-hiking occurs. The state of affairs denoted by adjectives of 'danger'²⁹ is the relation of the semantic object to its occurrence.

4.3 Adjectives of 'duration'

The semantic object denoted in the combination can be related to its duration, considering it an event. The duration of things by means of adjectives can be expressed in two ways: stating the duration of something in connection with its own existence; or stating the duration of something considered in connection with the other things implicit in the linguistic expression, taking as reference the semantic object created in the expression. In the first case we have the absolute duration of something, adjectives of 'duration: proper'³⁰, for example *chronic ill health*. The existence of ill health is related to the very existence of it, that is, to the period of time when health is denoted; and in the second, we have the statement of the duration of something in connection with the semantic object in the expression, adjectives of 'duration: retrospective'³¹. Typical predication of 'duration: retrospective' are the examples *the last bus*; or the opposition 'early': 'late' in *the early moments of his visit*, and *a late remark*.

4.4 Adjectives of 'factuality'

The expression of occurrence by means of adjectives can denote the degree of factuality of the semantic object denoted, that is, the degree of connection of the semantic object with reality. It is the case of *the actual words spoken*, *the factual basis of his theory*. The words spoken, although they are said to have been spoken, are referred to their occurrence, as the elements having really happened. Adjectives of 'factuality'³², emphasize the

²⁹ chancy, dangerous, dicey, fateful, hazardous, ill-omened, ill-starred, ominous, perilous, risky, safe, secure, threatening.

³⁰ brief, ceaseless, chronic, chronological, endless, enduring, eternal, everlasting, fleeting, full-time, incessant, lasting, long-term, momentary, non-stop, on-going, part-time, passing, past, periodic(al), permanent, perpetual, prolonged, protracted, short-term, temporal, temporary, transient, transitional, unending.

³¹ archaic, contemporaneous, contemporary, continual, continuous, current, early, erstwhile, eventual, final, former, immediate, inaugural, incipient, initial, instant, instantaneous, interim, introductory, last, last-minute, late, latter, modern, modern-day, obsolescent, obsolete, old-fashioned, outdated, overdue, prevalent, previous, primaeval, prior, progressive, prompt, provisional, punctual, spasmodic, subsequent, sudden, terminal, timely, topical, ultimate, up-to-date, up-to-the-minute.

³² accidental, actual, additional, advanced, aimless, alternate, alternating, alternative, arbitrary, auspicious, casual, common, commonplace, constant, customary, deliberate, eerie, effective, effectual, erratic, everyday, exorbitant, extraordinary, extreme, fabulous, factual, fallacious, familiar, fanciful, fantastic, far-fetched, feasible, fictitious, forthcoming, freakish, freaky, frequent, functional, futile, future, habitual, humdrum, imaginary, imminent, impending, liable, likely, monstrous, non-existent, objective, occasional, odd, ordinary, persistent, pointless, possible, potential, practical, pragmatic, prevailing, probable, promising, proper, prospective, purposeful, queer, rare, ready, real, recreational, regular, remarkable, routine, singular, spare, spontaneous, strange, subjective, successful, superfluous, surplus, theoretical, unique, unprepared, usual, vain, virtual, weird.

reference of the semantic object to its occurrence. The first example is to be interpreted as «the words which were spoken as they were spoken, that is, as they happened».

4.4.1 Adjectives of 'truth'

In direct connection with the degree of factuality of the semantic object denoted is the degree of adequacy of the semantic objects with the things existing as they do exist, that is, the relation of the expression to truth. A *believable story*, a *true story*, does not define story but the attitude of the speaker or listener in relation to that story. This means that the question whether the story is defined or not, interests in so far as it gives the support to establish the relation to the things existing as they are. The point of interest in the expression is the set of relationships of signification referring to the adequacy of them to reality. The object predicated occurs in so far as it is in connection with truth. Its occurrence, that is, its existence as a semantic object depends on the adequacy with real things. It is the case of adjectives of 'truth'³³.

4.4.2 Adjectives of 'amusement'

A particular kind of truth is the relationship of signification established with realities invented in the expression in order to provoke feelings of confusion or slight worry in listeners. The distorting adequacy of the semantic objects denoted with things as they are or as they are known is put in contrast. It is the case of adjectives of 'amusement'. A *funny story*, an *amusing story*, an *absurd attitude*, create a semantic object occurring with all the characteristics defining a real story. The distortion of the thing described and the knowledge of things as they are or as they are known, achieve the aimed at purpose. In fact, the semantic objects created in this way cause confusion only when they are first known, ceasing to cause confusion once they have been known. This fact manifests the connection of adjectives of 'amusement'³⁴ with things as they are or as they are known.

4.5 Adjectives of 'opportunity'

In a similar way the existence of the semantic objects created in the expression can be related to their adequacy with the moment affecting them and the parameters of meaning in them. A *demanding activity*, *drastic measures*, *it is imperative for the organization to get that post*, involve occurrence at a particular moment and relation to the essential characteristics in their meanings. *Drastic measures*, means measures (to be) taken urgently, severely and strongly. These measures exist because of their being urgent, severe and strong, that is, they occur because of their opportunity in connection with the problem affected. Their occurrence is created in the expression. *Demanding activity*, in the same way, means an activity existing as absorbing the time and energy of the actor of the activity. Its occurrence as a semantic object is due to the connection of it with the time implicit in the expression. It is the case of adjectives of 'opportunity'³⁵.

³³ believable, bogus, correct, credible, doubtful, fake, false, misleading, questionable, right, sham, true, truthful, wrong.

³⁴ absurd, amusing, comic, comical, entertaining, funny, hilarious, humorous, jocular.

³⁵ demanding, drastic, imperative, opportune, pressing, urgent.

So far all the adjectives predicating of 'occurrence' relate the existence or non-existence of the semantic object created in the expression to the occurrence of it as an event. They express relationships of signification relating the object created to the consideration of it as an event, something occurring or not, but with possibilities of occurring. This manifests a dynamic character. On the other hand, there is a group of adjectives of 'occurrence' referring the object created to a stated period of time, that is, meaning something as occurring over a period of time. They have dynamic character as well, but in a different way: stating the occurrence of something in a particular situation and as typical of that situation.

4.6 Adjectives of 'situation'

Adjectives of 'situation'³⁶ state the occurrence of the semantic object created over a period of time. The state of affairs denoted by these adjectives is dynamic as well, in spite of the name I have given to them, since they involve the repetition of the semantic object created at definite intervals. *The autumnal colours of Mediterranean forests*, means the repetition of those colours at the moment stated by the adjective. The semantic object created in the combination is predicated as something repeating; something existing at the moment in question but something that occurred in the past and will occur in future.

5 THE STRUCTURE OF PREDICATION OF ADJECTIVES OF 'OCCURRENCE'

Adjectives of 'occurrence' denote typical dynamic non-controlled states of affairs, that is, they are typical Processes³⁷. They usually have only one argument, the semantic object acting as the classeme defining the application of the adjective, playing the function of Force³⁸. With adjectives of 'danger' and 'chance' sometimes a second argument appears, stating the Recipient of the Process. If this actant appears in the expression, sometimes it may become redundant. To say *it is dangerous for you to drive with a dirty windscreen* adds nothing over *it is dangerous to drive with a dirty windscreen*. However this represents a possibility of expression, and sometimes it is necessary, but depending on the nature of the things stated: *it is dangerous for children to travel alone*.

The core meaning³⁹ of these adjectives can be stated with the expression HAPPEN, although every lexical field has its particular formulation. The most typical classeme these adjectives predicate of is a semantic object capable to be considered as something happening or likely to happen. This means that in most cases many dynamic nouns can perform this function. Examples:

³⁶ annual, autumnal, biannual, biennial, daily, diurnal, nocturnal, off, on, out of date, seasonal, summery, through, wintry.

³⁷ S. C. Dik classifies states of affairs based on two primary parameters, *control and dynamism*: Action, controlled dynamic state of affairs; Process, non-controlled dynamic state of affairs; Position, controlled non-dynamic state of affairs; and State, non-controlled non-dynamic state of affairs (cf. Dik 1979, 3.4.1).

³⁸ Cf. Dik 1979, chapter 3, for the description of the states of affairs and the semantic roles of the actants in them.

³⁹ In the set of parameters defining the predicate frame that follows I state the *core meaning* of the adjective determined by the different actants it has, defined in terms of the parameters explained by Dik 1979. I have chosen an adjective out of every lexical field. For predicate frames cf. Dik 1979, chapter 3.

Random: HAPPEN BY CHANCE (Process)

(x¹: <ABSTRACT: action or event> (x¹)_{Force})

(y¹: <without definite plan or purpose> (y¹)_{Manner}).

Dangerous: HAPPEN INVOLVING RISK (Process)

(x¹: <ABSTRACT: action or event> (x¹)_{Force})

(x²: <HUMAN: people in general> (x²)_{Recipient})

(y¹: <able to harm or hurt> (y¹)_{Manner})

Fateful: HAPPEN INVOLVING RISK (Process)

(x¹: <ABSTRACT: action or event> (x¹)_{Force})

(x²: <HUMAN: people in general> (x²)_{Recipient})

(y¹: <with disastrous effects> (y¹)_{Manner}).

Risky: HAPPEN INVOLVING RISK (Process)

(x¹: <ABSTRACT: action or event> (x¹)_{Force})

(x²: <HUMAN: people in general> (x²)_{Recipient})

(y¹: <with unpleasant effects> (y¹)_{Manner}).

Safe: HAPPEN INVOLVING RISK (Process)

(x¹: <HUMAN: people> (x¹)_{Patient})

(x²: <ABSTRACT: action or event> (x²)_{Force})

(y¹: <with no harmful effects> (y¹)_{Manner}).

Brief: HAPPEN AND CHANGE (Process)

(x¹: <ABSTRACT: action or event> (x¹)_{Force})

(y¹: <period of time> (y¹)_{Time})

(y²: <short> (y²)_{Manner}).

Early: HAPPEN AND CHANGE (Process)

(x¹: <ABSTRACT: period of time> (x¹)_{Force})

(x²: <ABSTRACT: event> (x²)_{Direction})

(y¹: <at the beginning> (y¹)_{Manner}).

Actual: HAPPEN IN A PARTICULAR WAY (Process)

(x¹: <ABSTRACT: action or event> (x¹)_{Force})

(y¹: <connected with real things> (y¹)_{Manner})

(y²: <not with imaginary things> (y²)_{Manner}).

Funny: LIKELY TO HAPPEN (Process)

(x¹: <ABSTRACT: action or idea> (x¹)_{Force})

(y¹: <causing amazement> (y¹)_{Manner})

(y²: <strangely and surprisingly> (y²)_{Manner})

True: LIKELY TO HAPPEN (Process)

(x¹: <ABSTRACT: action or event> (x¹)_{Force})

(y¹: <thought to be real> (y¹)_{Manner})

(y²: <based on real facts> (y²)_{Manner})

Drastic: REQUIRE TO EXIST (Process)

(x¹: <ABSTRACT: action> (x¹)_{Force})

(y¹: <strongly and severely> (y¹)_{Manner})

Daily: HAPPEN TYPICALLY (Process)

(x¹: <ABSTRACT: event or situation> (x¹)_{Force})

(y¹: <repeatedly> (y¹)_{Manner})

(y²: <in a period of time: a day> (y²)_{Time})

5.1 Commentary

The explanation that follows is made on the first three predicate frames. In the predicate frame of 'random' the character of the meaning conveyed by the adjective is stated. It is dynamic non-controlled, that is a Process. This character is stated in the core meaning formulated as HAPPEN BY CHANCE. The classeme this predicate applies of it is formulated as /action or event/. In fact this is the way the semantic object is considered in the combination. In this way many things can be predicated with this adjective. Examples *the killings were random, gruesome, and baffling, the way the books were arranged seemed completely random. This is just a random selection of the complaints we have received*⁴⁰. The semantic object denoted can be anything that can be considered an event or an action. In this way we can say *the random ordering of plants in the garden, a random garden*. Garden is nothing dynamic. The classeme can be anything; it is a question of consideration. And in this consists the dynamic character of these adjectives: in creating relationships of signification not directly expressed in the combination.

'Dangerous' and 'fateful' function in the say way. They are defined by the nouns they are combined with. Examples *a dangerous road, a dangerous house to live in*. Road and house are static in themselves. It is the adjective the element that makes them appear unsafe. In *a dangerous animal*, classifying function, the adjective creates kinds of animals: some are dangerous and some are not. The appearance of a second argument has already been commented (cf. 5).

6. CONCLUSION

The meanings of the words of a particular language reflect the different relationships of knowledge necessary to understand the things in the world and to manipulate them.

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⁴⁰ Examples taken from the *Collins Cobuild English Language Dictionary*.

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