

UGRC 150

CRITICAL THINKING & PRACTICAL REASONING

Session 2 – DEFINITIONS (PART 1)

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Session Overview

- Contrary to what many students might suppose before their exposure to this course, there are different types of definition. The type of definition found in the dictionary which is also the one with which students are familiar, **is just one of the six definitions that will be discussed**. In this session, **a distinction will be made between connotation and denotation of a word**, after which the **lexical, ostensive, operational and theoretical definitions** will be discussed.

- **Goals and Objectives:**

at the end the session, student will

- 1. Understand when the connotation or denotation of a word is implied in a definition*
- 2. Be able to tell the differences and relationship that exist between the connotation and denotation of a word.*
- 3. Be able to write good examples of connotation and denotation of a word.*

Session Outline

The key topics to be covered in the session are as follows:

- Topic One: ***DEFINITIONS***
sub topic: **connotation and denotation**
- Topic Three: ***THE TWO PARTS OF A STANDARD DEFINITION***
- Topic Four: ***TYPES OF DEFINITIONS:***
 - (a) lexical definition
 - (b) Ostensive definition
 - (c) Operational definition
 - (d) theoretical definition
 - (e) stipulative definition. **session 3(part2)**
 - (f) real definition. **session3 (part2)**



Reading List

- Log onto the UG Sakai LMS course site://sakai.ug.edu.gh/xxxxxxxxxx
- Read Unit 2 of Recommended Text –pages 16-22
- Watch ***the Videos for session 2- Definitions (Part 1)***
- Visit the ***Chat Room*** and discuss the ***Forum question for session 2 (Part 1)***



Topic One

DEFINITIONS

What is DEFINITION

- **Definition** is a declarative sentences that ***conveys or present the meaning*** of a word.
- **Examples:**
 1. Even number is any number that is divisible by two without a remainder.
 2. Culture is the way of life of people; their norms, values, music, and beliefs that are transmitted from one generation to the other.
 3. Bank is a place where moneys are kept or borrowed.



Sub Topic

CONNOTATION AND DENOTATION

Topic one continuation.

- In conveying the ***meaning of a word***, there are **two** ways that we can do that. We can either convey the meaning of a word by **CONNOTATION** or **DENOTATION**.
- **CONNOTATION:-** This is when the meaning of a word gives a ***description*** of the ***features*** or ***attributes*** or ***properties*** of range of objects in the world to which the word may be applied.
- **Examples. (*head, mobile phone,*)**
 - 1.Head** is the upper part of a human body or an animal's body that contains the brain and the face.



continuation

2. **Mobile phone** is an electronic device for receiving and making calls.
- ***NB. This is what it means to define a word by CONNOTATION.***
- **DENOTATION:-** This refers to ***the collection*** of all the things in the world that are correctly picked out by a word's connotation. It refers to the definition that ***coveys the meaning of a word by giving examples.***



Continuation

- **Examples:**
- The meaning of **mobile phone** for example are *Samsung phone, Nokia lumia phone, Motorola phone, LG Phone.*
- The meaning of **even number** for example are *2, 4, 6, 8, 10, 12, .*
- **NB. This is what it means to define a word by DENOTATION.**



Continuation

- However the **relationship** that exist between the connotation and the denotation is that, ***given the connotation of word, we can identify or determine it's denotation.***

- **For instance;**

If the word '**Head**' is defined as "***the upper part of the human body or an animal's body that contains the brain and the face***", then its denotations will be the head of every human being on earth as well as that of an animal.



CONTINUATION

- But the same word '**Head**' can also be defined as referring to *“someone who is in charge of an operation or institution.”* In this instance the denotations will be ***all persons that are in charge of specific operations or particular institutions.***
- Thus depending on the **connotation of a word** will we be able to determine a **the denotations**.
- ***NB. IF a word has several connotations, each connotation will have their respective denotations.***



Topic Two

THE TWO PARTS OF A STANDARD DEFINITION.

The parts of a DEFINITION.

- Every standard definition must **have two parts**. The *definiendum* and the *definiens*.
- **DEFINIENDUM:-** *The word to be defined* which is the *subject* of the definition(statement)

Example:

1 ***Even number*** is any number that is divisible by two without a remainder.

2. ***Triangle*** is a plane figure with three side and has all the interior angles summing up to 180 degrees.



Topic two continuation

- **DEFINIENS:-** The rest of the definition *that conveys the meaning of the word(definiendum)*. It gives the word's connotation.
- **Example:**
 1. Even number is *any number that is divisible by two without a remainder.*
 2. Triangle is *a plane figure with three side and has all the interior angles summing up to 180 degrees.*
 3. Widow is *a woman whose husband is dead.*



Topic Three

TYPES OF DEFINITION.

The types of DEFINITION

- When we talk about the “**types of definition**” we mean the ***different sources of and methods for creating or deriving definitions or meaning of words***. In this course we will be discussing **only six different types of definition**. However in this session we will be looking at **only four of the six types** of definition.
- **The Six Types Are As Follows.**
 1. *LEXICAL DEFINITION*
 2. *OSTENSIVE DEFINITION*
 3. *OPERATIONAL DEFINITION*
 4. *THEORETICAL DEFINITION*
 5. *STIPULATIVE DEFINITION session3(part2)**
 6. *REAL DEFINITION session3(part2)**



Lexical Definition

- **LEXICAL DEFINITION** is also called *dictionary definition*. It refers to definition of words that are taken from the dictionary. Dictionary definitions mostly describe the *connotation of words*.
- **The following two examples are taking from the dictionary.**
 1. Student is a learner enrolled in an educational institution
 2. Musician is someone who conducts or composes music as a profession.



Ostensive Definition

- Sometimes it becomes difficult to use words to convey the meaning of certain words such that it becomes more appropriate to show or point to an object to convey the meaning of the word. **Thus ostensive definition is when you give an example or point to an object to convey the meaning of a word.**
- **Example:**
 1. Using blood to convey what color red is.
 2. listing the set of numbers to convey what an even number is.
 3. Pointing to someone dancing an azonto to show a friend the who does not know what dance is AZONTO.

NB: Ostensive gives us the denotation of a word.



Operational Definition.

- **Operational definition** is when a series of step by step procedure is required to be followed in order to arrive at the meaning of a word. ***Following the instructions in the definition will let you understand what the word means.***
- **Example:**
 1. *To understand what an even number is, do the following. Take any number between 1 and 10, divide that number by two. Then check to see for a remainder . If there is no remainder then that number is an even number.*



Theoretical Definition

- **Theoretical definition** refers to meanings of words that come from theories that have gained acceptance in specific fields of scientific knowledge.
- **Examples:**
 1. Water is H_2O . *To understand this definition you must have been thought chemistry or be a chemist.*
 2. Even number is any number that is divisible by two without remainder. *To understand this definition you must have been thought mathematics or be a mathematician.*

