
An Illustrative Dictionary of Semantics (ILLUDS): A Review

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Abstract

It is a review on the book, ‘**An Illustrative Dictionary of Semantics (ILLUDS)**’ authored by Mohammad Forouzani (Martin Foroz). In his review on this book, Prof. Abraham Panavelil Abraham, Professor of English, Department of Foreign Languages, University of Nizwa, Sultanate of Oman, has made some remarks which are scholarly helpful and beneficial. The study of Semantics helps the learner to derive correct meanings of words and phrases and removes confusion which might lead the reader to believe a word has number of possible meanings. It is especially very useful not only to students, scholars and researchers in Linguistic studies but also other disciplines like philosophy, logic, law, literature and psychology in general and pragmatics, semantics, critical discourse analysis and critical thinking in particular.

A Review

Mohammed Forouzani, the author of ILLUDS is an erudite scholar, teacher and poet. He has published extensively on language teaching in both Persian (his first language) and English besides EFL Teaching methodology, critical pedagogy, materials development, and reading skills. His poems appeared in poetry journals such as *The Tower Journal*, *The Stray Branch*, *Mystical Muse*, *Amulet*, *The Criterion* etc. The experience that he gained through writing poetry, and courses that he has taught such as Critical Thinking and Semantics led him to the compilation of the Illustrative Dictionary of Semantics (ILLUDS) that took about seven years to complete. This dictionary is the first of this kind in form, content and scope. According to Forouzani, meaning is more important than form though he doesn’t underestimate “form” which makes meaning more comprehensible.

The study of Semantics helps the learner to derive correct meanings of words and phrases and removes confusion which might lead the reader to believe a word has number of possible meanings. It makes a relationship between a word and the sentence through their meanings. The seven types of meaning in Semantics are conceptual, connotative, stylistic, affective, reflected, collocative and thematic - all these are incorporated in ILLUDS. Explaining the concept 'semantic primes' in ILLUDS, Forouzani states, 'One of the main difference between semantic dictionary writer and ordinary dictionary writer is that the former is interested in sense relations between predicates while the latter's definitions are not usually phrased in terms of the specific, precisely defined sense relation...Clearly the definitions of dictionary written by ordinary dictionary writer shows a high degree of circularity. However, the linguistic semanticist is more inclined than the ordinary dictionary writer to leave some terms undefined. Such undefined terms are called 'semantic primes'. (ILLUDS, 447)

An Illustrative Dictionary of Semantics (ILLUDS) is exactly as the title suggests: Illustrative-1,267 entries (the author says more entries will be added in the next volume of the dictionary), written in alphabetical order, with the first entry as "above-across sense of 'oer' and the last one "zeugmaticity". Some of the concepts and terms, though complex are vividly and lucidly written so that the reader can grasp them clearly. The main entry has been transcribed on the International Phonetic (IPA) system. Regarding the cross- references, as the author mentions in the Introduction, "Some words or phrases are bold-typed within the entry, and some appear in UPPER-CASE LETTERS at the end of each entry. Both are in turn presented as individual entries throughout the dictionary. The difference is that the bold-typed terms are essential to the understanding of a given entry while the upper-case terms present further (complementary) information. Words or phrases within 'inverted commas 'are explained within the same entry". (ILLUDS, p.xii).

The dictionary is indeed a comprehensive reference book that deals with the concepts and principles of semantics in their spoken and written discourse. It is especially very useful not only to students, scholars, and researchers in Linguistic studies but also other disciplines like philosophy, logic, law, literature and psychology in general and pragmatics, semantics, critical discourse analysis and critical thinking in particular. According to the author, "ILLUDS aims to

provide language researchers with the main key terms as well as terminologies and phrases that may even have a slight or indirect relation to semantics and appear in linguistics course books and references. Regarding the scope of the book, the author feels that it may be more beneficial to be used at postgraduate level, but undergraduate students will also find it a useful reference tool as most of the key terms related to semantics is provided in this dictionary' (ILLUDS, P. xii)

College and University libraries globally should have a copy of this important volume in their reference section. The dictionary is a 'must' for all aspiring research scholars and individuals engaged in linguistic studies especially in the area of semantics.

Reference

Forouzani, M. (2019). An Illustrative Dictionary of Semantics (ILLUDS).
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