



LECTURE TITLE

جامعة ساوية

كلية التربية

اللغة/قسم اللغة الانكليزية

المرحلة الرابعة

الاسبوع الثاني

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SEMANTIC ROLES

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2. Theme (“patient”) : the semantic role of the noun phrase used to identify the entity that is **involved in or affected** by the action,).

The boy kicked the ball. (the ball =theme)

-The theme can also be an entity (The ball) that is simply being described (i.e. not performing an action), as in

The ball was red.

SEMANTIC/THEMATIC ROLES

“roles” that words fulfill within the situation described by a sentence.

I. Agent : the semantic role of the noun phrase refers to the one who performs the action of the verb in an event .

The boy kicked the ball.

The boy is (the agent) , “the entity that performs the action,”

SEMANTIC ROLES

Although agents are typically human (The boy), they can also be non-human entities that cause actions, as in noun phrases denoting a natural force (The wind), a machine (A car), or a creature (The dog), all of which affect the ball as theme.

The boy kicked the ball.

The wind blew the ball away.

A car ran over the ball.

The dog caught the ball.

AGENT AND THEME

The theme is typically non-human, but can be human (the boy), as in

The dog chased the boy.

In fact, the same physical entity can appear in two different semantic roles in a sentence, as in

The boy cut himself.

Here The boy is agent and himself is theme.



The dog caught the ball.

The theme is typically non-human, but can be human (the boy), as in The dog chased the boy. In fact, the same physical entity can appear in two different semantic roles in a sentence, as in The boy cut himself. Here The boy is agent and himself is theme.

A number of other semantic roles designate where an entity is in the description of an

event. Where an entity is (on the table, in the room) fills the role of **location**. Where the

entity moves from is the **source** (from Chicago) and where it moves to is the **goal** (to New

Orleans), as in We drove from Chicago to New Orleans. When we talk about transferring

money from savings to checking, the source is savings and the goal is checking.

All these semantic roles are illustrated in the following scenario. Note that a single

entity (e.g. George) can appear in several different semantic roles.



Mary saw a fly on the wall.

EXPERIENCER THEME LOCATION

She borrowed a magazine from George.

AGENT THEME SOURCE

She squashed the bug with the magazine.

AGENT THEME INSTRUMENT

She handed the magazine back to George.

AGENT THEME GOAL

“Gee thanks,” said George.

AGENT