

Simile Cliché Phrasemes in Colloquial Language

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Résumé – Abstract

Les clichés de comparaison (= simile), c'est-à-dire les combinaisons phraséologiques (= phrasèmes) incluant une comparaison sont l'objet de notre étude. Chaque simile inclut une conjonction de comparaison: *as* (*cold as ice*, 'froid comme la glace') ou *like* (*to waddle like a duck*, 'se dandiner comme un canard') en anglais, *como* en espagnol (*salir como rayo*, 'sortir comme un rayon'), *kak* en russe (*žyrnyj kak borov*, 'gras comme un porc'), etc., de sorte que de l'extérieur c'est une construction comparative. Mais l'ensemble de ses parties droites (les éléments de comparaison) est stéréotypé, l'ensemble des mots employé est restreint et ces derniers ont un sens alternatif. Ainsi, en accord avec les définitions de Mel'čuk, on les appelle semi-phrasèmes ou phrasèmes complets. De plus, ce sont dans leur majorité des fonctions lexicales telles que définies par Mel'čuk, de type standard ou non standard. Du fait que de tels clichés sont habituellement émotionnels et relèvent du registre familier, deux dimensions supplémentaires sont introduites pour leur description: l'appréciation subjective du locuteur sur la situation en jeu (paramètre sémantique) et un indicateur scalaire de registre de discours (paramètre pragmatique). Une collection de plus de 1100 clichés de comparaison (plus de 700 russes et plus de 400 espagnols) a été constituée, et à peu près 80 d'entre eux (dont des exemples en anglais) sont décrits en détail ici en fonction des paramètres choisis. On défend l'idée que des fonctions lexicales définies de façon plus complexe (induites par la pragmatique) sont nécessaires pour la description exhaustive des clichés de comparaison.

Simile clichés, i.e. phraseological word combinations (= *phrasemes*) of *simile* type are studied. Each simile includes a comparative conjunction: *as* (*cold as ice*) or *like* (*to waddle like a*

duck) in English, *como* in Spanish (*salir como rayo* ‘exit as a beam’), *kak* in Russian (*žyrnyj kak borov* ‘fat as a pig’), etc., so that outwardly it is a comparative construction. However, the repertoire of their right parts (i.e. something to compare with) is stereotyped, the words are used in a combinatorially restricted manner and in an alternative meaning. Hence, in accordance with Mel’čuk’s definitions, they are semi- or complete phrasemes. Moreover, the majority of them are lexical functions by I. Mel’čuk—of standard or non-standard type. Since such clichés are usually emotional and belong to colloquial style, two additional dimensions of their description are introduced: the speaker’s subjective evaluation of the referred situation (this is a semantic parameter) and a scaled style indicator (a pragmatic parameter). Sets of more than 700 Russian and more than 400 Spanish simile clichés were gathered, and ca. 80 of them including several English examples are described below in detail, in terms of the selected parameters. It is argued that more complexly defined—pragmatically induced—lexical functions are needed for the exhaustive description of simile clichés.

Mots Clés – Keywords

Phrasèmes, semiphrasèmes, phrasèmes complets, clichés, comparaisons, fonctions lexicales, sémantique, pragmatique.

Phrasemes, semiphrasemes, complete phrasemes, clichés, similes, lexical functions, semantics, pragmatics.

1 Introduction

Phraseological word combinations like English *cold as ice*, Spanish *salir como rayo* or Russian *žyrnyj kak borov* ‘fat as a pig’ are well known in each European language. The philologists call them similes (Encyclopædia Britannica, 1998) and consider them a figure of speech of metaphorical type—with explicit comparison between two unlike entities. The main issue of linguistic research for similes in belles-lettres masterpieces is what clues permit to recognize them and their true meaning in texts (Searle, 1979), (Glucksberg & Keysar, 1990). Meanwhile such expressions, in their stable and banal form, are primarily means of colloquial communication. Occurring in newspapers and public speeches, they merely reflect the colloquial usage. The simile clichés, in contrast with originative similes, can be revealed, enumerated, and studied deeply beforehand, and not only in the frames of psycholinguistics (Johnson, 1996) or instructive assessments (Coverley Luesebrink, 2001).

In their outward form, the similes contain a word under comparison (hereafter, keyword), a comparative conjunction (*as/like* in English, *como* in Spanish, *kak* in Russian...), and a word or word combination to compare with, to the right of the conjunction. However, the repertoire of the right parts is stereotyped and their options are few, so that simile clichés are highly restricted in the lexicon. The restrictions on repertoire concern the keywords as well: they are mainly features of human conduct, parts or features of human bodies, things of everyday life, and the like.

This paper has the objective of describing simile clichés within the framework of the Meaning-Text theory (MTT). Conforming to the definitions of (Mel’čuk, 1995), we divide them into semiphrasemes, whose global meaning conserves the meaning of the keyword, and

complete phrasemes, whose meaning does not directly include the meaning of any constituent. Then we gather statistics of semi- vs. complete phrasemes with keywords of various parts of speech (POS).

A deeper study of numerous examples shows that semiphraseme similes are not at all comparisons but pairs of “the modified – its modifier” type. The core meaning of the modifier in many cases coincides with value of a standard lexical function as defined in (Mel’čuk, 1995), while the rest can be considered as non-standard lexical functions.

Concerning the complete phrasemes, their whole semantic representation includes the meaning of a standard lexical function too, but does not confine to it.

Additionally, simile clichés proved to contain information of two other kinds.

Firstly, similes reflect an attitude of the speaker to the “keyword—its modifier” pair. This is a subjective evaluation of the objective core meaning. For example, the cliché *stubborn as a mule* contains, besides the core meaning ‘very stubborn,’ disapproval of the speaker concerning the situation under consideration given in an ironical style.

Secondly, similes contain information that could be called pragmatic. It is a style indicator showing the type of audience toward whom the utterance including the simile is oriented.

The core meaning, its subjective evaluation, and the style indicator comprise an exhaustive set of parameters for a specific simile. Taking into account this supplementary information, lexical functions in their usual definition proved to be insufficient to distinguish different options of the simile clichés values. We propose a more complicated tool—pragmatically induced lexical functions—for this purpose.

Hereafter, we supply our considerations with ca. 80 examples, English (*E*), Spanish (*S*) or Russian (*R*). Russian ones are transliterated and translated into English. The collected sets of similes for Spanish (430) and Russian (720) were used for accumulating some statistics.

2 Classification of the components

The prevalent subtree formula of similes is as follows:

keyword → *conj* → *resolvent*(...*comparant*...)

Keyword is a word under comparison. The signs → represent Surface Syntactic Relations. Specific labels of SSynRels at arrows are determined by the MTT (Mel’čuk, 1988). The POS of the keyword is specifically relevant, being verb, adjective, noun or adverb.

Standing to the right of the conjunction *conj* (= *as/like* in *E*, *como* in *S*, *kak* in *R*), the **resolvent** is a dependency subtree ruled by it. In a particular case, the resolvent can be a single node.

Comparant is a noun denoting a node of the resolvent. When the resolvent consists of a single node, it coincides with the comparant. Etymologically, the comparant can reflect a living creature (animal or person, maybe mythical), a part of living body or its excretion; an object

or a phenomenon of inanimate nature; an artifact; an information object; or a block. The last option means the resolvent with a verb and/or with several comparants syntactically not dependent on each other (*S irse como agua entre los dedos*; *E run like a bat out of hell*).

When the keyword is a noun phrase, the more frequent subtree formula is

keyword ← *copula* → *conj* → *resolvent*(...*comparant*...)

The meaning of a simile is not equal to the sum of the meanings of the components. Indeed, irrespective of etymology of the resolvent, the semantic representation of a simile does not include the meaning of these components. Hence all similes are phrasemes (Mel'čuk, 1995). If the whole semantic representation directly includes the meaning of the keyword, this is *semiphraseme* (*cold as ice* 'very cold'), otherwise it is *complete phraseme* (*pop like a balloon* 'completely and rapidly disappear').

One more linguistic entity important for the semantics of similes is *correlate*. When the keyword is a noun, the correlate coincides with the keyword. When the keyword is a verb or an adjective, it is an action or a feature of the correlate, and the correlate's node does not belong to the simile as such. E.g., in *The boy eats like a bird*, *boy* is the correlate. Sometimes correlate is merely presupposed in the sentence. The correlate influences the simile meaning by its binary semantic feature "person vs. non-person."

A comparative study of similes has shown that each of them contains a core semantic element modifying the keyword in some neutral manner, and two additional information components that the speaker conveys to the listener(s) on the situation under consideration and on the given speech act. These elements depend weakly upon one another and on the neutral semantic core. The speaker can select values of the two components nearly independently, thus selecting a specific simile. Though all element values are thinkable, not all their combinations are realizable in a given language (see below).

The first additional component represents a subjective speaker's evaluation of the situation. In distinction to the core component that can be considered an objective qualifier, this component is a subjective qualifier. The minimal set of attitudes to compose a subjective evaluation is supposedly the following: *neutr(al) attitude*, *appr(oval)*, *symp(athy)*, and *iron(ical) attitude*. We evaluate a phraseme with a logical formula combining these elements through the conjunction sign &, and each part of the formula can be preceded by the negation sign ¬. For example, the simile *S hablar como tarabilla* 'to speak like a rattle' contains the evaluation ¬*appr&iron* 'with disapproval and ironical attitude.' We could imagine semantic representation of an utterance with 'speaker' as a term node, and the logical formula as its ruling predicative node. The other arrow comes from this predicative node to the node of the core meaning (the graphic representation will be given later).

The second additional component of the simile interpretation is the style of the utterance. The core meaning and subjective evaluation are semantic categories, and can be treated as signified of a linguistic sign. In contradistinction to this, the style indicator is a link between the signified and a specific type of audience the utterance is oriented to. If this audience consists of respectable persons or the text is intended for printing, the style is usually neutral, otherwise a lower style can be used. The style can also include self-attribution of the speaker against the audience type.

The style can be considered a pragmatic component of the utterance introduced but not elaborated in the standard MTT. We characterize the style by the following levels:

I is elevated style (cf. explanations below).

0 is neutral style corresponding to rather rare similes like *S sentirse como en familia* ‘to feel oneself like in a family.’ It can be used in any situation including official documents.

-1 is colloquial style used by anybody for anyone (*S suave como seda*; *E cold as ice*). This style corresponds to the most of similes and is used everywhere except in official documents.

-2 is coarse colloquial style sometimes used by men addressing anyone (*S suave como la pompa de un bebé*; *E cold as a frog’s ass*).

-3 is indecent colloquial style sometimes used by men addressing other men = ‘I am coarse man and I address to my peers’ (*S suave como la nalga de una princesa*; *E cold as a witch’s tit*).

In our ironic epoch, the high style similes like *R zrenie kak u orla* ‘eyesight like an eagle’s’ looks like ironic judgment of the style *-1*. It seems better to attribute by *I* purely scientific, bookish, obsolete, etc., expressions. In any case, the high style is not interesting in this work.

The classification introduced permits us to represent the statistics of Spanish and Russian similes against the POS of their keywords and basic types of phrasemes:

POS of keyword	Spanish		Russian	
	Semiphra- semes, %	Complete phrasemes, %	Semiphra- semes, %	Complete phrasemes, %
Verb	61	16	47	20
Adjective	20	1	25	1
Noun	1	1	4	0
Adverb	0	0	3	0

Table 1. Statistics of simile clichés

Hence, the statistics of both languages are similar:

- Concerning phraseme type, the majority of similes are semiphrasemes (79-82%).
- Concerning the POS of the keyword, the majority are verbs (67-76%), then come adjectives (21-26%) and nouns (2-4%). Similes with adverbs are seemingly absent in Spanish, while in Russian they are rather numerous—partially because of that in the expressions like *It is hot as in the baths* the adjective *hot* takes the form of corresponding adverb *žarko* ‘hotly.’

3 Detailed examples

Let us now arrange in detail the description of ca. 80 simile clichés of the three languages in terms of the aforementioned parameters: the POS of keyword; semi- vs. complete phrasemes;

keyword vs. resolvent; standard vs. non-standard lexical functions; neutral equivalent of lexical function (= objective evaluation) vs. subjective evaluation; style.

<i>Word Combination</i>			<i>Semantics & Pragmatics</i>			
<i>Lng.</i>	<i>Keyword</i>	<i>Resolvent</i>	<i>Lexical Function</i>	<i>Neutral equivalent</i>	<i>Subjective evaluation</i>	<i>Style</i>
<i>E</i>	<i>collapse</i>	<i>a house of cards</i>	Ver	<i>totally</i>	¬appr&iron	-1
<i>E</i>	<i>eat</i>	<i>a bird</i>	AntiMagn	<i>little</i>	iron	-1
<i>E</i>	<i>sleep</i>	<i>a baby</i>	Magn	<i>soundly</i>	iron	-1
<i>S</i>	<i>arremolinar</i>	<i>abejas a la miel</i>	Magn	<i>exageradamente</i>	iron	-1
<i>S</i>	<i>arremolinar</i>	<i>moscas en la mierda</i>	Magn	<i>exageradamente</i>	¬appr&iron	-3
<i>S</i>	<i>conocer</i>	<i>[a] la palma de la mano</i>	Magn	<i>profundamente</i>	appr	-1
<i>S</i>	<i>crecer</i>	<i>la mala hierba</i>	Magn	<i>abundantemente</i>	¬appr&iron	-1
<i>S</i>	<i>cuidar</i>	<i>a las niñas de sus ojos</i>	Magn	<i>mucho</i>	appr	-1
<i>S</i>	<i>defenderse</i>	<i>gato boca arriba</i>	Magn	<i>bravamente</i>	appr&iron	-1
<i>S</i>	<i>hablar</i>	<i>[un] cargador</i>	AntiVer	<i>groseramente</i>	¬appr	-1
<i>S</i>	<i>hablar</i>	<i>la gente</i>	Ver	<i>correctamente</i>	appr	0
<i>S</i>	<i>llevarse</i>	<i>perros y gatos</i>	AntiBon	<i>mal</i>	¬appr	-1
<i>S</i>	<i>portarse</i>	<i>[un] hombre</i>	Ver	<i>varonilmente</i>	appr	0
<i>S</i>	<i>quedar (algo)</i>	<i>pintado</i>	Bon	<i>bien</i>	appr	-1
<i>S</i>	<i>seguir (a alguien)</i>	<i>[un] perrito faldero</i>	AntiVer	<i>humilladamente</i>	¬appr&iron	-1
<i>S</i>	<i>trabajar</i>	<i>[un] burro</i>	Magn	<i>mucho</i>	symp&iron	-1
<i>S</i>	<i>vender</i>	<i>pan caliente</i>	Magn	<i>rapidamente</i>	appr	-1
<i>R</i>	<i>dvigat'sja</i> 'move'	<i>sonnye muxi</i> 'drowsy flies'	AntiMagn	<i>medlenno</i> 'slowly'	¬appr&iron	-1
<i>R</i>	<i>pogibnut'</i> 'perish'	<i>geroj</i> 'a hero'	Ver	<i>geroičeski</i> 'heroically'	symp	0
<i>R</i>	<i>rabotat'</i> 'work'	<i>lošad'</i> 'a horse'	Magn	<i>uporno</i> 'persistently'	symp&iron	-1
<i>R</i>	<i>odevat'sja</i> 'dress oneself'	<i>čučelo</i> 'a scarecrow'	AntiVer	<i>ploxo</i> 'badly'	¬appr&iron	-1
<i>R</i>	<i>plavat'</i> 'swim'	<i>ryba</i> 'a fish'	Bon	<i>xorošo</i> 'well'	appr	-1

Table 2. Semiphrasemes with verbs: standard LFs

<i>Word Combination</i>			<i>Semantics & Pragmatics</i>			
<i>Lang.</i>	<i>Keyword</i>	<i>Resolvent</i>	<i>Lexical Function</i>	<i>Neutral equivalent</i>	<i>Subjective evaluation</i>	<i>Style</i>
<i>E</i>	<i>cold</i>	<i>ice</i>	Magn	<i>very</i>	neutr	-1
<i>E</i>	<i>cold</i>	<i>a frog's ass</i>	Magn	<i>very</i>	iron	-2
<i>E</i>	<i>cold</i>	<i>a witch's tit</i>	Magn	<i>very</i>	iron	-3
<i>E</i>	<i>crazy</i>	<i>a fox</i>	AntiVer	<i>not at all</i>	iron	-1
<i>E</i>	<i>dead</i>	<i>a doornail</i>	Ver	<i>absolutely</i>	iron	-1
<i>E</i>	<i>hard</i>	<i>a stone</i>	Magn	<i>very</i>	neutr	-1
<i>E</i>	<i>light</i>	<i>a feather</i>	Magn	<i>very</i>	neutr	-1
<i>E</i>	<i>slow</i>	<i>molasses</i>	Magn	<i>very</i>	¬appr	-1
<i>E</i>	<i>strong</i>	<i>an ox</i>	Magn	<i>very</i>	appr	-1
<i>E</i>	<i>white</i>	<i>snow</i>	Magn	<i>absolutely</i>	neutr	-1
<i>S</i>	<i>casado</i>	<i>Dios manda</i>	Ver	<i>adecuadamente</i>	appr	-1
<i>S</i>	<i>ciego</i>	<i>[un] topo</i>	Magn	<i>totalmente</i>	iron	-1
<i>S</i>	<i>cierto</i>	<i>dos y dos son cuatro</i>	Magn	<i>absolutamente</i>	neutr	-1
<i>S</i>	<i>flaco</i>	<i>[una] lombriz</i>	Magn	<i>muy</i>	¬appr&iron	-1
<i>S</i>	<i>lejos</i>	<i>como el culo del mundo</i>	Magn	<i>muy</i>	iron	-3
<i>S</i>	<i>negro</i>	<i>el azabache</i>	Magn	<i>muy</i>	neutr	-1
<i>S</i>	<i>reluciente</i>	<i>el oro</i>	Magn	<i>muy</i>	appr	0
<i>S</i>	<i>sordo</i>	<i>[una] tapia</i>	Magn	<i>totalmente</i>	iron	-1

Simile cliché phrasemes in colloquial language

Word Combination			Semantics & Pragmatics			
Lang.	Keyword	Resolvent	Lexical Function	Neutral equivalent	Subjective evaluation	Style
S	suave	seda	Magn	muy	appr	-1
S	suave	la pompa de un bebé	Magn	muy	iron	-2
S	suave	la nalga de una princesa	Magn	muy	iron	-3
R	golodnyj 'hungry'	volk 'wolf'	Magn	očen 'very'	iron	-1
R	truslivy 'cowardly'	zajats 'hare'	Magn	očen 'very'	¬appr&iron	-1
R	grjaznyj 'dirty'	svin'ja 'pig'	Magn	očen 'very'	¬appr&iron	-1
R	nužnyj 'necessary'	prošlogodnij sneg 'last year's snow'	AntiMagn	soveršenno ne 'absolutely not'	iron	-1
R	složennyj 'built'	Appolon 'Appolo'	Bon	xorošo 'well'	appr	-1

Table 3. Semiphrasemes with adjectives: standard LFs

Word Combination			Semantics & Pragmatics			
Lang.	Keyword	Resolvent	Lexical Function	Neutral equivalent	Subjective evaluation	Style
S	cuello	de tronco	Bon	ancho	iron	-1
R	zdorov'e 'health'	u byka 'of a bull'	Bon	otmennoe 'excellent'	appr&iron	-1
R	muskuly 'muscles'	stal' 'steel'	Bon	krepkie 'strong'	appr	-1
R	poxodka 'step'	u slona 'of an elephant'	AntiBon	tjaželaja 'heavy'	¬appr&iron	-1
R	dožd' 'rain'	iz vedra 'from a bucket'	Magn	prolivnoj 'pouring'	neutr	-1

Table 4. Semiphrasemes with nouns: standard LFs

Word Combination			Semantics & Pragmatics		
Lang.	Keyword	Resolvent	Non-standard LF	Emot. evaluation	Style
S	ojos	un plato	ampliamente abiertos y estupidos	desap&iron	-1
S	piel	de gallina	con poros grandes	desap&iron	-1
R	lysina 'bald patch'	bljudtse 'saucer'	kruglaja 'round'	iron	-1
R	kostjum 'suit'	s igoločki 'from the needle'	sovsem novyj 'brand-new'	appr	-1

Table 5. Semiphrasemes with nouns: non-standard LFs

Lang.	Complete phraseme	Semantics & Pragmatics			
		Core interpretation	Standard lexical function	Subjective evaluation	Style
E	be like sheep without shepherd	become flustered[D]	Ver(D)=completely	symp	0
S	andar como gallina chueca	manifestar orgullo[D]	Magn(D) = gran	¬appr&iron	-1
S	andar como huevo de perro	ser borracho[D]	Magn(D) = muy	¬appr&iron	-3
S	entrar como [una] tromba	avanzar con fuerza[D]	Magn(D) = mucho	¬appr&iron	-1
S	estallar como [un] volcán	enfurecerse bruscamente[D]	Magn(D) = muy	¬appr	-1
S	marchar como sobre ruedas	desarrollarse fácil[D]	Magn(D) = muy	neutr	-1
S	ponerse como [un] jitomate	enrojecer[D] de la cara	Magn(D) = mucho	neutr	-1
S	salir como [un] tiro	irse rápidamente[D]	Magn(D) = muy	appr&iron	-1

Lang.	Complete phraseme	Semantics & Pragmatics			
		Core interpretation	Standard lexical function	Subjective evaluation	Style
<i>S</i>	<i>ser como la sombra</i>	<i>seguir</i> [D]	Ver (D) = <i>con perseverancia</i>	iron	-1
<i>R</i>	<i>katat 'sja kak syr v masle</i> 'roll like cheese in butter'	<i>žit 'xorošo</i> [D] 'live in prosperity'	Magn (D) = <i>očen</i> 'very'	iron	-1
<i>R</i>	<i>vytjagivat 'kak kleščami</i> 'extract as with pincers'	<i>vysprashivat</i> [D] 'inquire'	Magn (D) = <i>uporno</i> 'persistently'	¬appr&iron	-1
<i>R</i>	<i>obrubit 'kak toporom</i> 'chop off as with an axe'	<i>prekratit</i> [D] 'stop'	Magn (D) = <i>vnezapno</i> 'suddenly'	appr	-1
<i>R</i>	<i>byt 'kak iz zadnitsy vynutym</i> 'be like pulled out of an ass'	<i>byt 'pomjatym</i> [D] 'be baggy'	Magn (D) = <i>očen</i> 'very'	¬appr&iron	-3

Table 6. Complete phrasemes with verbs

Lang.	Complete phraseme	Semantics & Pragmatics			
		Core interpretation	Standard LF	Subjective evaluation	Style
<i>R</i>	<i>jasnyj kak den</i> ' * 'bright as day'	<i>ponjatnyj</i> [D] 'understandable'	Magn (D)= <i>vpolne</i> 'quite'	appr	-1
<i>R</i>	<i>xolodnyj kak mramor</i> ** 'cold as marble'	<i>nepristupnyj</i> [D] 'inaccessible'	Magn (D)= <i>soveršenno</i> 'absolutely'	¬appr	-1
<i>R</i>	<i>pritornyj kak patoka</i> 'sickly sweet like molasses'	<i>neiskrenne</i> [D] <i>privetlivyj</i> 'insincerely affable'	Magn (D) = <i>očen</i> 'very'	¬appr	-1

Table 7. Complete phrasemes with adjectives

* One homonym of the adjective *jasnyj*₁ 'bright' is taken compatible with the given comparant, whereas the interpretation contains the meaning of another homonym *jasnyj*₂ 'understandable' semantically compatible with the keyword. Hence, the whole meaning can not be deduced from the meaning of the parts. Analogical use of homonyms could be demonstrated in other languages as well, cf. *E clear* or *sharp*.

** The correlate is a person, and this gives a complete phraseme. For a non-person correlate, such a simile could be a semiphraseme, but in Russian this specific simile is not applied to non-persons.

4 Pragmatically induced lexical functions

Based on the multiplicity of examples given above, a semantic and pragmatic representation of a simile cliché can be represented as in the Fig. 1.

If the objective is to design a theoretical tool for constructing semiphraseme similes, the usual definition of lexical functions seems insufficient. Indeed, it cannot distinguish options with the same core meaning but different values of subjective evaluation and style.

The simplest way to avoid difficulties is to introduce pragmatically induced lexical functions with three arguments: $\mathcal{PLF}(\text{arg1}, \text{arg2}, \text{arg3})$. Entities forming these functions are on the circle in the Fig. 1:

1. **Keyword feature** node reflects predicative semanteme of the objective evaluation for the property of **keyword**. It determines the name of the lexical function. If it satisfies the standardization conditions (Mel'čuk, 1995), it proved to be an analogue for a standard LF **Magn**, **Ver**, **Bon**, **AntiMagn**, **AntiVer** or **AntiBon**.

2. The lexeme at the **keyword** node determines the main argument **arg1** of $\mathcal{PLF}$. For usually defined LFs, this argument is unique.
3. The semanteme combination at the **subjective evaluation** node is the **arg2** of the $\mathcal{PLF}$. It has the shape of the aforementioned logical formula.
4. The **audience type** node is the **arg3** of the $\mathcal{PLF}$. It determines the speaker's orientation to a specific audience.

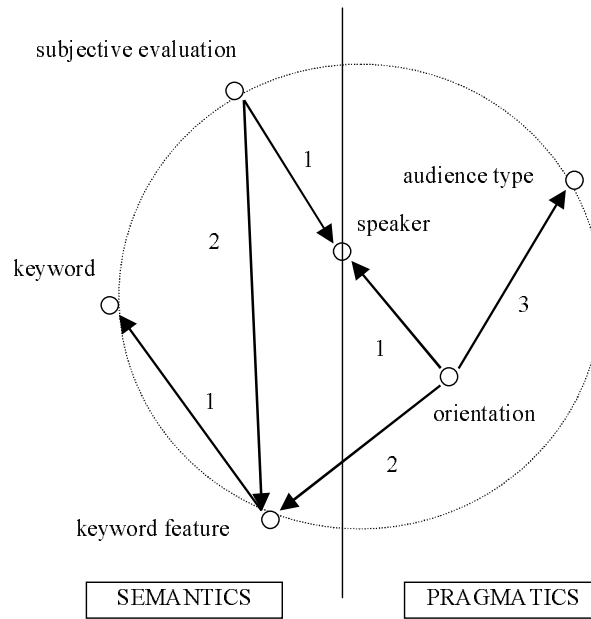


Fig. 1. Semantic and pragmatic representation

The structure of Fig. 1 does not always give a precise representation of simile clichés:

1. The style in our definition includes self-attribution of the speaker concerning the supposed audience. This is not taken into account by the node **orientation**.
2. The arrow 2 outputting from **subjective evaluation** is directed to the whole situation expressed by the **keyword feature** node. This well suits to *appr* and *iron* elements of logical formulas, but not to *symp* element, since sympathy/antipathy is directed to persons, i.e. to the term nodes of the situation's participants.
3. Some polyvalent verbs bring problems. For them a subjective evaluation can contain two quite different predicative nodes, and the evaluation is bipartite. Indeed, if the valences of a verb are humans with antagonistic interests, the evaluation can be positive (*appr*, *symp*) with regard to one valence and negative ($\neg\textit{appr}$, $\neg\textit{symp}$) to another. E.g., in the phraseme (somebody₁) *treats* (somebody₂) *as a slave*, the speaker expresses disapproval to the oppressor and sympathy to his victim.
4. The representation proposed is not applicable to complete phrasemes and to the cases when there is a direct semantic link to the correlate out of the simile.

The issues mentioned were not taken into account in the previous examples. Particularly, we ignored problems with some polyvalent similes. However, the proposed way of reasoning stays valid for more complicated cases as well.

Below are examples of the pragmatically induced lexical function ***PMagn*** in English. All options to the right are values of standard LF **Magn**(*cold*), while the additional arguments distinguish them in the abovementioned aspects:

PMagn (*cold*, neutr, 0) = *very; extremely*

PMagn (*cold*, neutr, -1) = *as ice; as snow; as stone*

PMagn (*cold*, iron, -2) = *as a frog's ass*

PMagn (*cold*, iron, -3) = *as a witch's tit*

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