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"Lexical Semantics using reductive paraphrases (NSM approach)."

### Abstract:

Reductive paraphrase simply means explicating a word-meaning using a paraphrase that is framed in words that are simpler and more intelligible than the one being explicated. Over a 30-year research program led by Anna Wierzbicka, linguists working in the NSM approach have developed a comprehensive method of lexical-semantic analysis based on reductive paraphrase in ordinary non-technical words. They claim to have discovered a set of 64 simple universal concepts (semantic primes), such as 'someone', 'something', 'do', 'happen', 'want', 'good', 'bad', 'this', 'other', 'because' and 'if'. Evidence suggests that semantic primes are lexicalised in all languages, and that they have an inherent combinatorial grammar that is also shared across all languages. In this presentation I will review the development and application of the NSM (natural semantic metalanguage) approach, and show how it works with examples from English causative verbs, emotion terms, and interjections.