How Language Conveys Meaning:

- Definitional Theory of Word Meaning – The theory that mental representations of word meanings consist of a necessary and sufficient set of semantic features
  - Eg: The representations of apple might be round edible, sweet, red, etc.
- Semantic Feature – A basic semantic category or concept that cannot be decomposed into smaller or less inclusive categories. According to several strict theories, the basic features are all sensory-perceptual
- Prototype Theory – A theory in which concepts or word meanings are formed around average or typical values
  - Some things seem “more” like a category than another
    - Eg: Parrot is a “better” bird than a penguin
- Family Resemblance Structure – An overlapping set of semantic features shared by members of a category, such that no members of the category need to have all of the features but all members have at least one of them
- Members of a family that have more of the prototypical features are known as typical Smiths or perfect Schwartzes
- Prototypes – The typical or most familiar example of a category
- Have well developed ideas (folk theories) about why objects or properties are the way they are
  - Eg: Lawnmower can never be made of ice
- Subject noun phrase – Plays the semantic role of actor or agent of the action
- Predicate verb phrase – Expresses the action or state of the agent or actor
- Proposition – A predicate-argument structure where the verb is the predicated act or state and the noun phrases are the arguments playing various semantic roles [sentence meanings]
- Semantic role – The part that each phrase plays in the “who did what to whom” drama described by a sentence [cause and effect]
- Case markers – A word or affix that indicates the semantic role played by some noun phrase in a sentence
- Garden path – A premature, false syntactic analysis of a sentence as it is being heard or read, which must be mentally revised when later information within the sentence falsifies the initial interpretation