

CHAPTER FOUR

A CASE STUDY OF *HAPPY*, *SAD*, and *UNHAPPY*

4.1 Introduction

This case study examines the adjective *happy* and its two antonyms, *sad* and *unhappy*. This case is similar to that of *big* and its two antonyms *little* and *small* in that it deals with one word which has two antonyms, antonyms which are themselves near-synonyms. However, *happy*, *sad*, and *unhappy* have some additional features that make them interesting candidates for further study. First, as will be discussed in more detail below, *happy*, *sad*, and *unhappy* are semantically and syntactically more complex than the adjectives in the previous two case studies. They are semantically more complex in that they describe emotions, internal psychological processes which cannot be seen, rather than qualities of things "out there" in the world, qualities such as size or wetness which can often be measured. They are also more complex in that they can be used both to describe the experiencer of the emotion (*a happy child*, *an unhappy customer*) and to describe something which causes the experiencer to feel the emotion (*a sad story*, *an unhappy marriage*). They are syntactically more complex in that they occur in a wider range of syntactic frames than the adjectives in the previous studies; like the others, they occur both in attributive position (*a happy childhood*, *sad news*) and in predicative position (*I'm very happy*; *you look sad*), but unlike the others, they can also occur with several different clausal modifiers and prepositional phrases, for example, *I'm happy to hear about your marriage* and *She's unhappy with her job*.

Another thing that distinguishes this case study from that of *big*, *little*, and *small* is that one of the two antonyms of *happy* is morphologically simple (*sad*) while the other is formed by affixation (*unhappy*). There are many similar cases in English, for example: *friendly/unfriendly* and *friendly/hostile*, *healthy/unhealthy* and *healthy/sick*, *clean/unclean* and *clean/dirty*, *interesting/uninteresting* and *interesting/boring*, *wise/unwise* and *wise/foolish* and *fertile/infertile* and *fertile/barren*; and *true/untrue* and *true/false*. In all of these cases, the two antonyms are near-synonyms of each other. This was also true in the case of *big*, *little*, and *small*, but that case is exceptional in English in that neither of the two antonyms of *big* are derived from *big*. (Another exception is *good/bad* and *good/evil*.) In most of the cases in which one adjective has two morphologically simple antonyms, these antonyms are not near-synonyms because they correspond to distinct senses of the adjective, e.g., *right/left* and *right/wrong*, *old/young* and *old/new*, and *light/heavy* and *light/dark*. Since the case of *happy*, *unhappy* and *sad* fits into a larger pattern of antonymy in English, the conclusions drawn from this case study can potentially be extended to several other cases.¹

This case study focuses on three related questions. First, why does *happy* have two antonyms instead of just one? Second, what is the difference in meaning between *sad* and *unhappy*? And finally, what is the significance of the fact that *unhappy* is derived from *happy* but *sad* is not? As in the other two

¹I could also have chosen to examine one of the typical cases of one adjective with two morphologically simple antonyms, but it seemed to me that these cases are relatively straightforward and therefore not as interesting. In the case of *light/heavy* and *light/dark* for example, there are clearly two distinct (although historically related) senses of *light*, and these two senses have easily distinguished semantic ranges. For example, only one of the senses of *light* can modify nouns such as *sky* and *day*, and these nouns can only be modified by one of the antonyms (*dark* but not *heavy*). This differences between *little* and *small* and likewise *sad* and *unhappy* are not so obvious, so I decided to focus on these cases.

case studies, these questions are answered by looking at the semantic ranges of the adjectives involved. It is shown that the semantic range of *happy* is wider than the ranges of either *sad* or *unhappy*, overlapping and thus contrasting with them both. The notion of semantic range is used to distinguish *sad* and *unhappy* and to explain how they each contrast with *happy*.

4.2 Investigating the meanings of *happy*, *sad*, and *unhappy*

As mentioned above, *happy*, *sad*, and *unhappy* can all be used to describe either a feeling that a person has or to describe something which causes that feeling. The first type of meaning can be understood by examining the second--that is, the nature of happiness and the differences between the feeling of sadness and the feeling of unhappiness can be uncovered by looking at the kinds of things or the kinds of situations which cause people to feel happy, sad, or unhappy. As in the other case studies, I begin by looking at the definitions given in the learners' dictionaries for clues, and then turn to data from the *New York Times* corpus to discover what types of nouns are typically modified by the attributive form of the adjectives. Additional sources of data are also needed, however, because *happy*, *sad*, and *unhappy* can all be used as predicative adjectives and with various modifying phrases, and the program used on the *New York Times* corpus did not extract data on these kinds of uses. It is important so consider the non-attributive uses of these adjectives because, as will be discussed below, their meanings are sometimes different in the various syntactic frames, and because the non-attributive uses are quite common. *LDOCE* says that the most common use of the adjective *happy*, for example, is as a predicative adjective in the structure *be happy* (almost 40% of

the uses in their corpora--made up of the British National corpus and the Longman Lancaster Corpus which contain both spoken and written data--are of this type). The attributive use is next most common, making up 25% of the examples, followed by *happy to do something* (about 15%), *happy with* (about 12%) and *happy about* (about 5%) and *happy that* (less than 5%).² In order to get examples of usages of the adjectives in all the syntactic frames, I collected examples from the four learners' dictionaries and from the quotations in the CD-ROM version of the *Oxford English Dictionary* (abbreviated here as *OED*).

In the next section, the meanings of *sad* and *unhappy* are compared using the dictionary definitions and the data from both sources; then in section 4.4, the meaning of *happy* is investigated.

4.3 The meanings of *sad* and *unhappy*

Sad and *unhappy* are near-synonyms, and the definitions in all of the learners' dictionaries reflect the fact that *sad* and *unhappy* are close in meaning; *LLA*, which organizes words conceptually, has a single heading for "sad/unhappy". In *CCED*, *LDOCE*, and *OALD*, "unhappy" is used in the definition of *sad*; and in both *OALD* and *CCED*, "sad" is used in the definition of *unhappy*. However, the definitions go on to provide some clues about the differences between *sad* and *unhappy*. Consider the first few meanings listed

²*LDOCE* gives no statistics on *sad* and *unhappy*, but I counted up the various types of syntactic frames which occurred in the examples of *unhappy* and *sad* I found in quotations from *OED* from after 1900. There were a total of 68 examples of *unhappy*; of these 53 were examples of the attributive use, 4 were simple predicative uses, and in 11, *unhappy* was followed by a preposition or *that*. *Sad* was found in 131 examples, and of these, 97 were attributive uses, 23 were predicative uses, and 11 had some form of the phrase "It is sad that..." In these examples, attributive uses are more common than predicative uses, but it is not possible to directly compare these numbers with the statistics for *happy* from *LDOCE* because the latter are based on two large corpora containing both written and spoken forms while my count is just based on written examples from the *OED*.

for these two adjectives in *CCED* and *LDOCE*.

- (1) The first definitions for *sad* and *unhappy* in *CCED*
 - a. *sad*: If you are sad about something, you feel unhappy, usually because something has happened that you do not like.
 - b. *unhappy*: 1. If you are unhappy, you are sad and depressed 2. If you are unhappy with something, you are not pleased about it or satisfied with it.
- (2) The first definitions for *sad* and *unhappy* in *LDOCE*
 - a. *sad*: unhappy, but especially because something has happened to you or someone else.
 - b. *unhappy*: 1. not happy 2. feeling worried or annoyed because you do not like what is happening in a situation.

These definitions give us two clues about the difference between *sad* and *unhappy*; first, they tell us that sadness is a feeling that comes in response to 'something that has happened'; that is, sadness is a response to some kind of event. Second, we find that in addition to describing a feeling that is 'not happy' or 'sad', *unhappy* can sometimes mean 'not satisfied' or 'worried or annoyed'.

In entries under "words for feeling sad or unhappy," repeated in (3) below, the *LLA* distinguishes *sad* and *unhappy* by characterizing the kinds of things that lead to sad feelings and unhappy feelings.

- (3) *sad* and *unhappy* in *LLA*
 - a. *sad*: not happy, especially when you are thinking about something unpleasant that happened to you or to someone else, or when a happy time is ending [adj not usually before a noun] (*LLA*, s.v. "sad")
 - b. *unhappy*: not happy, especially because you are in a situation, job, relationship etc., which is very unpleasant and which you do not enjoy at all. (*LLA*, s.v. "sad")

Taking the definitions in (1)-(3) together, we can generalize that *sad* is used to describe a feeling which arises in response to a particular unpleasant event, while *unhappy* is used to describe a feeling about an on-going situation that we do not like.³ It also seems that *unhappy* describes a wider range of emotions than *sad*, from something similar to *sadness* to *worry* and *anxiety*. The examples in the next sections illustrate these differences between *sad* and *unhappy* by showing some of the typical situations in which people feel sad and unhappy.

4.3.1 Feelingsad

In what kinds of situations do people feel sad? That is, what kind of 'unpleasant events' make people feel sad? The examples below in (4) show a very common use of *sad* in which *sad* is in the predicate and the subject of a the sentence is a person (often expressed by a pronoun or a proper noun). These examples illustrate some of the typical situations in which people feel *sad*. They show that people often feel *sad* in response to some kind of big change in their lives; typical changes include a death of someone we know, as in (a)-(c), leaving familiar people or places (d)-(f), or being left behind by someone (g). People also feel sad when, as *LLA* says, "a happy time is coming to an end," as in (h) in which a vacation is coming to an end, and when they lose things that are important to them, as in (i) and (j). The event which triggers sadness may be a change in awareness, such as when a person realizes that something is

³Wierzbicka (1990) finds that a distinction between something that has happened and something that is on-going is useful for distinguishing many different emotional terms. For example, she says that this is one of the differences between *annoyed* (which describes a feeling about something that has happened) and *irritated* (which describes a feeling about a situation that is still going on).

not as really as good as he or she had thought it was (k). Finally, examples (l) and (m), as well as (a), show that people sometimes feel sad when they hear about bad things happening to other people.

- (4) a. I was sad to hear of his death. (LLA)
- b. When his father had told him of Oupa's death, Jannie had been very sad since he had loved Oupa. (OED)
- c. John is sad because his dog has died. (OALD)
- d. I'd grown fond of our little house and was sad to leave it. (CCED)
- e. Helen felt very sad as she said goodbye to him for the last time. (LLA)
- f. On his last day of work, he said he felt sad about retiring. (LLA)
- g. I'm sad you're leaving. (OALD)
- h. All the children were sad because their vacation was over for another year. (LLA)
- i. Feel so low down an' sad, Lawd, lost ev'rything I ever had (OED)
- j. I'm sad about my toys getting burned up in the fire. (CCED)
- k. Eric is sad because his idol has feet of clay. (OED)
- l. It always makes me sad when I hear about those poor people who have nowhere to live. (LLA)
- m. I'm sad that Julie's marriage is on the verge of breaking up. (CCED)

Unhappy could replace *sad* in some, but not all, of these sentences; however, with *unhappy*, the meaning would be slightly different. Take (f) for example. In this sentence, "he" seems to be feeling sad because he is leaving his co-

workers and/or a job which he has enjoyed. If the sentence is changed to *On his last day of work, he said he felt unhappy about retiring*, the interpretation changes. In this case, the speaker may be unhappy because he is being forced to retire against his wishes, or he may be feeling worried or uneasy about his future after retiring. Similarly, if (h) is changed to *All the children were unhappy because their vacation was over for another year*, it sounds as if the children are unhappy because they are dreading what will come next--school. This contrast in meaning comes about because *sad* describes an immediate emotional response to an event, while as will be discussed in section 4.3.3, *unhappy* is used more often to describe cases in which a person is reflecting on his/her situation, particularly an on-going situation.

In several of the sentences in (4), it would sound very unnatural to use *unhappy* instead of *sad*. First, people do not usually use *unhappy* to describe how they feel about a death, so *unhappy* would sound strange in sentences (a)-(c). Second, it seems that we do not usually use *unhappy* to describe sympathetic feeling toward someone else who is experiencing bad things, so it cannot replace *sad* in (l) and (m); similarly, although we might say that we *feel sad* for someone, (in a sentence such as *I feel so sad for you because you have to leave home*), we do not usually *feel unhappy* for someone.

As an attributive adjective, *sad* occurs with many nouns that name things that make us feel sad, including the ones in (5) which occurred significantly often with *sad* in the *New York Times* corpus.⁴ Many of these are abstract nouns that describe the kinds of situations listed in (4); for example, *sad loss* often

⁴As in the previous case studies, the lists of nouns from the *New York Times* corpus include only those which had a mutual information value of 3 or higher with the adjective, indicating a significant relationship.

refers to the loss of a person through death, *sad memories* could be memories of leaving a familiar person or place, and *sad news* could be news about something bad that has happened to a friend.

- (5) conclusion, experience, ending, event, loss, melodies, memories, news, note, occasion, saga, song(s), story (-ies), tale, thing

With many of these nouns, *unhappy* sounds fine, and in fact, it occurs in the *New York Times* corpus with five of them: *ending*, *event(s)*, *experience*, *news*, and *story*. However, in this case too, the meaning of *unhappy* is slightly different from the meaning of *sad*, as will be discussed in more detail in section 4.3.3. The nouns in (5) which do not occur with *unhappy* and which sound quite strange with it, e.g., *melody* and *occasion*, strengthen the characterization of the feeling of sadness as an immediate emotional response--we do not have to think about or analyze a melody in order to feel that it is sad.

Another attributive use of *sad* is with nouns related to facial expressions. With these nouns, such as the ones listed in (6) which occurred with *sad* in the *New York Times* corpus, *sad* means something like 'expressing sadness.'

- (6) eyes, face(s), laughter, look, smile

Although *unhappy* does not sound too bad with some of these nouns, e.g., *unhappy face*, it did not occur in the corpus with any nouns of this type. With some of the nouns in (5), *sad* may also mean 'expressing sadness' as well as 'causing sadness'; for example, *sad melodies* and *sad stories* may express the sadness of the person who writes or performs or tells them while at the same time, they cause an audience to feel sad.

Figure 28 summarizes the uses of *sad* in the sense of 'feeling sad' or 'expressing sadness,' as well as in the other senses discussed in the next

section. Unlike the diagram of semantic range in the previous case studies, this one explicitly shows both predicative and attributive uses of the adjective because the two uses are rather different.

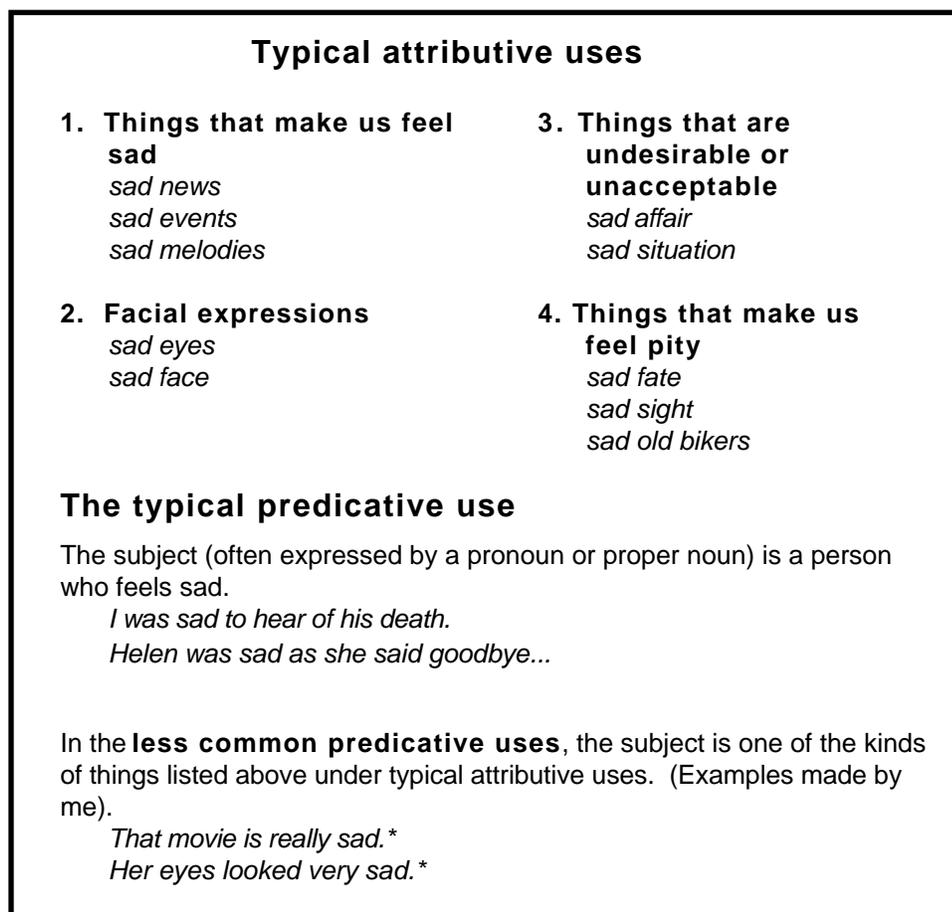


Figure 28. The semantic range of *sad*⁵

4.3.2 Other meanings of *sad*

In the sentences in (4) and with the nouns in (5) and (6), *sad* describes a sorrowful kind of feeling, but with many other nouns, its meaning is somewhat different. In phrases such as *sad fact* and *the sad truth*, the meaning of *sad* is

⁵I wrote the sentences marked with asterisks. This kind of use is rather rare and I could not find any good examples elsewhere.

something like 'deserving blame or criticism'. *OALD* paraphrases this meaning as "very bad and unacceptable," while *CCED* paraphrases it as "unfortunate or undesirable." *Sad* has this kind of meaning with many of the nouns which it occurred with in the *New York Times* corpus, listed below in (7).

- (7) account, affair, chapter, commentary, [conclusion], day, confrontation, episode, fact, fate, history, illustration, irony, litany, reality, refusal, situation, sight, state, truth, waste

Some examples of this kind of use of *sad* in context are given in (8) below.

- (8) a. It's a sad truth that children are the biggest victims of passive smoking. (*CCED*)
- b. It's a sad state of affairs when you can't go out at night for fear of being attacked. (*LDOCE*)
- c. The sad sight of fighting on the terracing and terrified youngsters spilling on to the park. (*OED*)
- d. The market ignores the sad fate of so many American wonder electronic stocks: overbilled, and then crashing at the first set back. (*OED*)

The dictionaries say that this meaning of *sad* is found with the attributive use of *sad*, but as the examples from *OED* in (9) show, this meaning of *sad* is found with other syntactic frames as well.

- (9) a. It is sad that, as it approaches its majority, this organization should have run into deep waters. (*OED*)
- b. The Braunlichs will also tell you that, sad as it is, middle America is leery of things it gets for free. (*OED*)
- c. How sad that such a great pianist as Schnabel...showed his lack of understanding in his inappropriate pedaling. (*OED*)
- d. Looking at Miss Burger through binoculars was porno...anything porno is so hatefully sad. (*OED*)

A closely related meaning of *sad* is the one found in phrases such as *a sad plight* or *in sad condition*. In these phrases, *sad* means "worse than is deserved and so making one feel pity or regret" (*OALD*). *Sad* often has this kind of meaning with the nouns from the *New York Times* corpus listed in (10a). Some of these nouns, for example *fate* and *state*, are also listed in (7); out of context, it can be hard to tell whether a *sad fate* is a fate which should inspire pity or a fate which should inspire criticism, such as criticism of the events or decisions that led up to it. Example (10b), repeated from (8d) seems more like the latter, but example (10c) seems more like the former.

- (10) a. condition, fate, plight, portrait, shape, sight(s), spectacle, state
- b. The market ignores the sad fate of so many American wonder electronic stocks: overbullied, and then crashing at the first set back. (OED)
- c. "...from this fatal spot no shipwrecked mariner has ever returned." This speech discouraged us much, and we began to lament over our sad fate.⁶

As we saw in the examples in (4), when *sad* is used in the predicate of a sentence with a human subject (e.g., *I'm sad you're leaving*), *sad* describes the feeling that the subject is experiencing. However, when *sad* is used as an attributive adjective modifying nouns that name people, the interpretation is often very different. The phrase *a sad old man* could be used to describe a man who habitually feels sad (a use which would be similar to the uses of *sad* in (4)), but more often, the meaning is similar to that of *sad* with the nouns in (9) and (10)--a *sad old man* is one who should be pitied and perhaps criticized. There were no examples of this type of use among the nouns from the *New York*

⁶This is from one of the texts available from Project Gutenberg, *The Arabian Nights Entertainments*, selected and edited by Andrew Lang.

Times corpus data, but a few were found in the learners' dictionaries and *OED* quotations. These are given in (11) below.

- (11) a. She's a sad character--I don't think she has any friends at all.
(LDOCE)
- b. ...sad old bikers and youngsters who think Jim Morrison is God.
(CCED)
- c. Rubashov and Gletkin are a sad pair of Jesuits, consumed and dulled as human beings by their casuistry. (OED)
- d. The sad, klutzy ballerinas of the Music Hall pollute children's first live experience of dance. (OED)

The dictionaries say that this is an informal usage, which may explain why it did not occur often in the *New York Times* corpus.

Why doesn't *sad old biker* mean 'an old biker who is feeling sad'? The explanation lies in a fact noted by Bolinger (1967), who explains that adjectives which describe temporary qualities are usually not found in attributive position:

If an adjective names a quality that is too fleeting to characterize anything, it is restricted (with that meaning) to predicative, or to post-adjunct, position. The meaning of *ready* in *The man is ready* or *The materials ready will be shipped* is excluded from **the ready man...* Adjectives referring to temporary states of health, sensation, mind, or spirits are similarly restricted (Bolinger 1967, 9-10).

If feeling sad is a temporary state of mind--which seems reasonable because we feel *sad* in response to something bad that happens, but after awhile we stop feeling *sad*--then *sad* should have the sense of 'feeling sad' only in predicative position, but not in attributive position. That is, in fact, what is seen in the examples above. When *sad* occurs in attributive position, as in (5)-(11), it describes a rather permanent quality of a thing. A *sad song* or a *sad occasion* (such as a funeral) is essentially sad, not just temporarily sad. Thus in the

phrase *sad old biker*, *sad* is usually interpreted as naming a permanent quality, so a *sad old biker* is 'a pathetic old biker', not 'an old biker who is feeling sad'. In this regard, *sad* is different from both *happy* and *unhappy*; a *happy biker* and an *unhappy biker* could be paraphrased as 'a biker who is feeling happy' and 'a biker who is feeling unhappy'. This is evidence that the feelings described by *happy* and *unhappy* are not as temporary as the feeling described by *sad*. There is, however, one case in which *sad* in attributive position with nouns that name people could be interpreted as meaning 'feeling sad', namely, when the feeling of sadness is understood as habitual feeling. It would be possible use the phrase *sad, lonely child*, for example, to describe a child who usually feels sad.

4.3.3 Feelingunhappy

What is an *unhappy* feeling and how is it different from a *sad* feeling? According to the dictionaries, the two are sometimes quite similar; a person who is unhappy is someone who is "sad or miserable; not happy" (*OALD*), "sad or depressed" (*CCED*), and simply "not happy" (*LDOCE*). However, the feelings of sadness and unhappiness are not identical. As was mentioned above, *unhappy* describes a feeling about an on-going situation. The word *depressed* in the *CCED* serves as a clue to this; by definition, *depression* is a feeling that lasts over an extended period of time. The examples (12) below show just a few of these situations: People may feel unhappy about their jobs (a), their marriages (b), about not being parents (c), about their sexual lives (d), or their political situation (e).

- (12) a. If you are so unhappy, why don't you change your job?
(LDOCE)

- b. Her marriage is in trouble, and she is desperately unhappy. (CCED)
- c. He's unhappy now because he thinks he isn't able to give me a child. And I'm unhappy because I've lost my child. (OED)
- d. Many people are made unhappy by their heterosexuality, but I don't believe the psychotherapist exists who would try to cure that. (OED)
- e. The rank and file of the United Front and of Bergery's Front Commune are merely unhappy and disgruntled people. (OED)

Although examples (12a) and (12b) are given in the dictionaries to illustrate the use of *unhappy* to mean 'sad or depressed', these two examples could also be used to illustrate another use of *unhappy*, one found with the rest of the examples in (12), which is to describe a feeling of dissatisfaction. The dictionaries say that if you are *unhappy* about something, you may be "anxious about or not satisfied with it" (*OALD*), "not pleased about it or not satisfied with it" (*CCED*), or "feeling worried or annoyed because you do not like what is happening in a situation" (*LDOCE*). Although the wording is a bit different in each of these definitions, they are all getting at the same of kind of thing--when people are unhappy with a situation, they feel that it is not they way they would like it to be. This is necessarily a vague notion because there are many different reasons why a person might be unhappy and many different emotions which could contribute to a feeling of unhappiness. For example, a person who is unhappy about his/her job may be feeling frustrated, bored, worried, angry, dissatisfied or some combination of these or other negative emotions, and the problems associated with such a job might cause a person to feel depressed. However, in this situation, it is unlikely that a person would feel sad in the sense

of 'sorrowful'. As we saw in the previous section, the basic meaning of *sad* describes a kind of immediate emotional response, something we feel when we think about a particular bad thing that has happened (such as a death) or when we think about a happy time coming to an end. When a person feels unhappy with his/her job, it is usually not a feeling arising from one sad event; rather, it is a feeling that grows over time as he or she reflects on the things that are unsatisfactory about the job, mentally compares the job with an ideal one, or reflects on the potential problems ahead. This kind of mental reflection is found in all the examples in (12), which is probably why *sad* cannot replace *unhappy* in sentences (12a), (b), (d) or (e)

Sad could replace *unhappy* in (12c), at least in the second sentence: *I'm sad because I've lost my child*. However, I think that with *sad* the meaning is slightly different, with a focus on the immediate sense of sorrow over the loss, while with *unhappy*, the speaker is probably thinking in the long-term, perhaps imagining a lifetime without the child.

The meaning of *unhappy* as 'unsatisfied' is especially common when *unhappy* is followed by a prepositional phrase which describes the situation which is causing the unhappiness. The dictionaries say that this type of meaning occurs with *unhappy* when it is followed by *about* or *with*, as in (a)-(d) in (13) below, but the examples in (e) and (f) show that this type of meaning occurs with other prepositions as well. Example (13a) is one in which the feeling of unhappiness is probably some mixture of feeling unsatisfied and feeling anxious or nervous.

(13) a. Investors were unhappy about the risk. (OALD)

b. Sob sisters, those ladies who advise the unhappy about their

problems (OED)

- c. He has been unhappy with his son's political leanings. (CCED)
- d. Customers are unhappy with the software support and service they receive. (OED)
- e. Both anorectics and bulimics are often unhappy in their predicament in which everything in life is subjected to the twin obsessions with food and shape. (OED)
- f. The politicians at Bonn are rather unhappy at the widespread use of the term "Ostpolitik" by their Western allies. (OED)

In these examples we see additional illustrations of the kinds of things which make people unhappy: They are unhappy because of risks (a); problems (b), (d), and (e); or because they do not like other people's actions (c) and (f).

Again, *sad* cannot replace *unhappy* in any of these sentences.

As an attributive adjective, *unhappy* often occurs with nouns that name people, such as the seven nouns listed in (14) with which it occurred significantly often in the *New York Times* corpus.

(14) family, lover, nations,⁷ neighbors, players, souls, wife

With these nouns, the meaning of *unhappy* is basically the same as its meaning in predicative position in the sentences in (12) and (13); in other words, an *unhappy family* and *unhappy neighbors* are a family and neighbors who are feeling one or more of the range of negative feelings that fall under the category of unhappiness, i.e., depression, disappointment, dissatisfaction, anxiety, worry, etc. The sentences from *OED* in (15) give a few more examples of the attributive form of *unhappy* used with nouns that name people, and from these

⁷I put *nations* in with this group because *unhappy nations* are nations full of unhappy people.

we can get a better idea of the particular meanings of *unhappy*. In (15a) and (15c), *unhappy* means 'dissatisfied' and probably also 'angry', while in (15b) it probably means something like 'frustrated' and 'depressed.'

- (15)a. Companies don't mind legitimate complaints. They don't want unhappy people telling their friends about shoddy products. (OED)
- b. Her countrywomen are unhappy housewives trapped in the home by an ideal of Kinder, Küche, Kirche which is vigorously pressed by American educators,...and husbands. (OED)
- c. Because the projects are in the jurisdiction of differing metal trades unions, the unhappy welders have had to pay tribute not to just one union...but to many metal trades unions... (OED)

We saw above that *sad*, with the meaning 'feeling sad, sorrowful', does not occur attributively because 'feeling sad' is a temporary state of mind, probably because the event which causes the sadness is usually already over or will soon be over. The examples here, in which *unhappy* occurs attributively with the meaning 'feeling unhappy', suggest that feeling unhappy is not a temporary state of mind, but rather a long-term one. This makes sense, since if the situation which causes the unhappiness continues, the feeling will naturally continue--the housewives in (15b), are likely to feel unhappy for as long as they feel "trapped in the home" by the attitudes of society.

Figure 29 below shows these nouns with which *unhappy* means 'feeling unhappy', and it also shows some other uses of *unhappy* which are discussed in the next section.

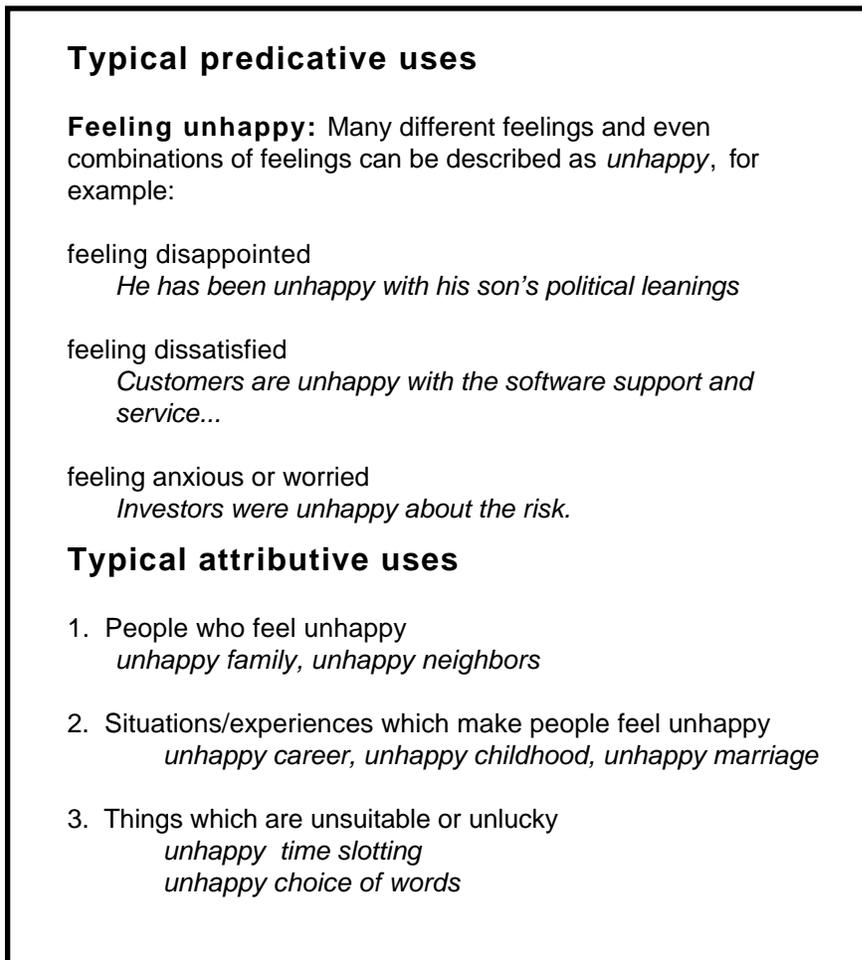


Figure 29. The semantic range of *unhappy*

4.3.4 Other meanings of *unhappy*

In addition to describing people's feelings of unhappiness, *unhappy* can be used to describe things (usually experiences or situations) which make people feel unhappy because they are "unfortunate; that is or should be regretted" (*OALD*) or "not satisfactory or desirable" (*CCED*). Some examples of this use of *unhappy* are given in (16) below.

- (16)a. The legislation represents in itself an unhappy compromise.
(*CCED*)

- b. It is our hope that this unhappy chapter in the history of relations between our two countries will soon be closed. (CCED)
- c. unhappy experiences of writing for television (CCED)
- d. Ratings have climbed despite the show's unhappy time slotting between 'Laramie' and 'Bronco', without a big show preceding it on the network. (OED)
- e. High school students who fail the university exam and are waiting to try again are called *ronin*, a reference to the landless samurai of old Japan which clearly describes their unhappy displaced position in a chronically status-sensitive society. (OED)
- f. The First Secretary and the Chancellor continued to grapple with the trade figures and to lament the unhappy state of the pound. (OED)

For example, in (16a), the *unhappy compromise* is a compromise that no one is entirely satisfied with, in (16b), the *unhappy chapter* refers to some kind of trouble between the two countries that people wish had not happened, and in (d), the *unhappy time slotting* is a time slotting that is unfortunate because it is between two unpopular shows.

This type of meaning is often found with the attributive use of *unhappy*, and it is found with many of the nouns that occurred significantly often with *unhappy* in the *New York Times* corpus and which are listed in (17) below.

- (17) affair, career, childhood, choice, ending, event(s), experience(s), implications, love, marriage(s), moments, news, past, prospect, situation, story, thoughts, visit

At first glance, the use of *unhappy* in (16) and (17) seems to be the same as the use of *sad* with the nouns in (8) to (10) above--at least the meanings can be paraphrased in similar ways: *CCED*, for instance, says "A sad event or

situation is unfortunate or undesirable" and that "an unhappy situation or choice is not satisfactory or desirable." And in fact, several of the nouns in (8) also occurred significantly often with *sad*. These are listed in (18) below.

(18) affair, ending, event(s), experience, news, story

However, although these nouns occur with both adjectives, I think they are likely to be used in different contexts. Consider *unhappy ending* and *sad ending*. *Sad ending* is more likely to be used to describe the ending of a book or movie, and in this case, *sad* means 'causing people to feel sad'; that is, *sad* describes a quality of the ending from the viewpoint of an on-looker. *Unhappy ending*, on the other hand, might be used to describe the ending of a love affair, and in this case, it is the participants (not the on-lookers) who feel unhappy.

Although several of the nouns in (18) also occurred with *sad*, most did not, and combinations such as *?sad career*, *?sad childhood*, *?sad choice*, and *?sad marriage* all sound quite strange, probably for the same reasons. Consider the case of an *unhappy marriage*, for example. In (12b), repeated below as (19a), *unhappy* is describing the feelings of a person who is experiencing the on-going problems of an unhappy marriage. The attributive adjective *unhappy* could also be used in such a situation (e.g., *She has a very unhappy marriage*), but *sad* could not replace *unhappy* in (19a). An on-looker who hears about the unhappy marriage may feel *sad*, as in (4m), repeated in (19b), but here *sad* is describing a reaction to finding out that a negative event (the breakup of the marriage) may soon occur.

(19) a. Her marriage is in trouble, and she is desperately unhappy.
(CCED)

b. I'm sad that Julie's marriage is on the verge of breaking up.
(CCED)

Since the problems of a marriage do not usually cause people to feel sorrow, it is not described by the attributive adjective *sad*.⁸

To understand the difference between *unhappy* and *sad*, it is also useful to look at the kinds of nouns which occurred with *sad* but not *unhappy* in the *New York Times* corpus. Consider the following combinations: *?unhappy condition*, *?unhappy fact*, *unhappy irony*, *?unhappy melody*, *?unhappy reality*, *?unhappy sight*, *?unhappy song*, and *?unhappy truth*. The infelicity of these phrases can again be explained by characterizing *sad* as an emotional reaction to something that has happened and *unhappy* as a feeling that builds up over time in response to a complicated situation. *A sad sight* or *a sad fact* is something we can recognize and immediately react to, but it takes more time to recognize that a *childhood*, a *career* or *implications* are unhappy. Similarly, a *melody* may be called *sad* but not *unhappy* because music can produce an immediate emotional response in us, but for non-musicians at least, it does not contain any kind of situation that we can reflect on and judge as being *unhappy*.

There is one more meaning of *unhappy*, one which is quite different from any of the meanings of *sad*, a meaning which can be paraphrased as "not suitable or appropriate" (*OALD*) or "unsuitable or unlucky" (*LDOCE*). This is the kind of meaning *unhappy* has in phrases such as *unhappy choice of words*. There were no examples of this type of use with the nouns from the *New York Times* corpus, perhaps because in this use *unhappy* often modifies a phrase rather than a single word and the mutual information statistic picks out only single words. However, *OED* data provided the example in (20a), and (20b),

⁸I think it would be possible to use the phrase *a sad marriage* with the interpretation of *sad* as 'pitiful', that is, the same meaning of *sad* which is found in the phrase *sad old bikers*.

which is repeated from (16d) above, may also be considered an example of this type of meaning.

- (20) a. The description of the rule in *Rylands v. Fletcher* as an example of absolute liability in tort is unhappy in view of some half a dozen exceptions which are admitted as qualifications of it. (OED)
- b. Ratings have climbed despite the show's unhappy time slotting between 'Laramie' and 'Bronco', without a big show preceding it on the network. (OED)

As we will see in the next section, this use of *unhappy* corresponds to one of the uses of *happy*.

4.4 The meaning of *happy*

Knowing that *sad* and *unhappy* are both antonyms of *happy*, and having seen in the two previous case studies that antonyms have a great deal of overlapping semantic range, it can be predicted that the semantic range of *happy* will overlap the ranges of both *sad* and *unhappy*. This section, which looks at the meanings of *happy*, shows that this is indeed the case. *Happy* has several different uses and most of them contrast with one of the uses of *sad* or *unhappy*.

Just like *sad* and *unhappy*, *happy* can describe a feeling that people have, and it can also describe things which cause this feeling. But what kind of a feeling is a *happy feeling*? The first entries under *happy* in the three learners' dictionaries, shown below in (21), tie the feeling of happiness to pleasure. They also say that the feeling of happiness can be the result of something nice happening to us, and that happiness involves feelings of contentment and satisfaction.

- (21) a. *happy* in *OALD*
 1(a) feeling or expressing pleasure, contentment, etc.
- b. *happy* in *LDOCE*
 1. having feelings of pleasure, for example because something good has happened to you
- c. *happy* in *CCED*
 1. Someone who is happy has feelings of pleasure, usually because something nice has happened or because they feel satisfied with their life.

There are some interesting parallels between these definitions and the definitions for *sad* and *unhappy* that we saw earlier. *Happy* is described as a response to 'something that has happened' just as *sad* is; the difference is that in the case of *happy*, the "something" is 'something good' or 'something nice', and in the case of *sad* it is 'something unpleasant' or 'something you do not like'. Thus both *happy* and *sad* describe immediate emotional responses to events. However, that is not all there is to the feeling of happiness; the definitions also mention that if you feel happy you 'feel contentment' or you 'feel satisfied'. This meaning of *happy* contrasts with *unhappy* in that when someone feels anxious, worried, frustrated, dissatisfied and so on, she/he is definitely not feeling contented or satisfied.

In distinguishing the sense of happy as 'feeling pleasure' from the sense of happy as 'feeling satisfaction or contentment', I am making a distinction that is not explicitly made in the learners' dictionaries; the definitions in (21) list both 'pleasure' and 'contentment' under the same entry. Most native speakers probably would not distinguish these two senses, and in fact, in many situations, it might be impossible to separate the two senses. For example, among the examples (22) below in which *happy* is used as a predicative adjective, there

are several in which *happy* appears to mean both 'feeling pleasure' and 'feeling satisfied or content'. In the situations in (a) and (b), feelings of pleasure and contentment are probably simultaneous, and in others, like those (c) to (f), an immediate sense of pleasure may be followed by a long-term sense of satisfaction or contentment.

- (22) a. He was perfectly happy with a 'penny dreadful', a warm fire, a friendly dog, and a good meal inside of him. (OED)
- b. Why don't we have train hostesses like air hostesses...who visit every carriage and see that we are happy and comfortable. (OED)
- c. I'm just happy to be back running. (CCED)
- d. The invention ...of the 'Teddy Bear Doll' will go down in history along with the kiddie car and other things that make life happy for children. (OED)
- e. My husband was a Saturday Night soldier, the militia, and he couldn't wait for the war, and when it started, zoom, he was called up and then he was happy. (OED)
- f. My work is important. When I can turn on a student or write a good paper, I'm really happy, I'm elated. (OED)

Because feelings of pleasure and feelings of contentment are often experienced together in life, it makes sense that a language might have just one word to describe both kinds of feelings. However, it is also possible for a language to distinguish the two. In Japanese, for example, there are two different basic words corresponding to English *happy*, each of which has its

own antonym.⁹ As will be discussed further in section 4.5, the fact that *happy* has two antonyms is one reason to distinguish the two senses. Also, there are many cases in which it is possible for *happy* to have only one of these two basic meanings. For example, in (23a) and (23b) *happy* seems to mean 'feeling pleasure' but not necessarily 'feeling satisfied', and in (23c) and (23d), *happy* means 'feeling satisfied or content' rather than 'feeling pleasure.'

- (23) a. Larry looked really happy when we gave him his present.
(LDOCE)
- b. He was now happy...telling the bar about the Leopard Men in West Africa. (OED)
- c. I won't be happy until I know she's safe. (OALD)
- d. ...he cites poll and poll in which Americans say they are happy despite their feelings that all is not well with the country. (OED)

The distinction between these two senses of *happy* is clearer when *happy* is followed by a prepositional phrase, especially one headed with *about* or *with*. In these cases, *happy* does not have the meaning of 'feeling pleasure'; instead (OALD) says that in this use, *happy* means "feeling satisfied that

⁹To describe the facts briefly, in Japanese, there is an adjective *ureshii* which roughly corresponds to *happy* in the sense of 'feeling pleasure'. It is used in many of the same situations, e.g., to describe how a person feels upon passing an exam or hearing good news. Its opposite is *kanashii*, an adjective used in corresponding situations such as to describe how a person feels upon failing an exam or hearing news of a death. Corresponding to the the more long-lasting sense of *happy* as 'satisfied' or 'content', there is the noun *shiawase*, which is used, for example, in wishing someone happiness in marriage. Its opposite is another noun, *fukou*, which describes misfortune, such as an accident or an unhappy marriage. (Although I am calling *shiawase* and *fukou* nouns, it would be more accurate to say that they belong to a subclass of nouns which are often used as adjectives, in phrases such as *fukou-na jinsei*, 'an unhappy life'). The Japanese words show an interesting parallel to their English equivalents: Like *happy* and *sad*, *ureshii* and *kanashii*, are both morphologically simple words. However, like *unhappy*, *fukou* is a derived adjective formed with the negative prefix *fu-*. Although the phonetic forms of *fukou* and *shiawase* do not indicate a derivational relationship, the written forms do show some kind of relationship in that they both include the same Chinese character.

something is good, right, etc.," while LDOCE says it means "satisfied or not worried," and CCED explains it this way: "If you are happy about a situation, you are satisfied with it, for example, because you think that something is being done in the right way." The examples below in (24) show some typical situations in which someone might feel *happy* in this sense. Examples (a) to (g) all have *about* or *with*, but (h) to (k) show a few examples of this meaning in other syntactic frames. Many of the sentences are negative, describing a situation in which someone is not happy.

- (24) a. I'm not happy with his work this term. (OALD)
- b. We liked our room, but we weren't happy about the food in the hotel. (OALD)
- c. Are you happy with your new car? (LDOCE)
- d. If you are not happy with a repair, go back and complain. (CCED)
- e. I'm not happy about Dave riding around on that motorbike. (CCED)
- f. The airlines over the years had enough confidence in our track record to feel perfectly happy about this procedure. (OED)
- g. Many of us...are not at all happy about current packing-station prices. (OED)
- h. Windsurfers tend to be individualists, happy to sail alone. (OED)
- i. He's happy that I deal with it myself. (CCED)
- j. Mrs. A.D. Scott, regarded as one of the toughest stonewallers ever to play locally, was not very happy on the very fast surface. (OED)

- k. When he got old he was really quite happy to let the department run itself. (CCED)

The meaning of *happy* in the sentences above contrasts with the meaning of *unhappy* in the sentences in (13) and (15) in that *unhappy* can be used to describe all of the same kinds of situations; for example, people can be *unhappy* with someone's work, as in (24a), with the food they are served, as in (b) or with car repairs, as in (d). For grammatical reasons, *unhappy* cannot replace *happy* in (h) and (i), but these sentences can be rephrased slightly so that *unhappy* can be used: *Windsurfers tend to be group-minded, unhappy about sailing alone* and *He's unhappy about my dealing with it myself*.

Sad, in contrast, cannot normally be used to describe how people feel in any of these situations. It would sound very strange, for example, to say that someone is sad about a meal or car repairs.

Like *unhappy* (but unlike *sad*), *happy* is often used as an attributive adjective with nouns that name people; with this use, *happy* means 'feeling pleasure or contentment.' It occurred significantly often with several nouns of this type in the *New York Times* corpus; these are listed in (25) below. The examples in (26a-d) show this type of use in context.

- (25) adults, baby, campers,¹⁰ couple(s), family (-ies), kid, lovers, man, natives, person, vacationers, warriors

- (26) a He was a happy child who very rarely cried. (LDOCE)

- b. I see happy Hispanophiles streaming from Greenock and Blackburn to the Costa del Sol. (OED)

¹⁰*Happy campers* and *happy warrior* have idiomatic meanings in that they can be used to describe people who are not actually *campers* or *warriors*. They are, however, people who are *happy* in the sense described here.

- c. the happy crowd of scooting, skating children in the Tuileries gardens (OED)
- d. a happy gang of young people being kinesthetically hypnotized by a clarinetist (OED)

This use of *happy* is an area of semantic range in which *happy* overlaps with *unhappy*. *Unhappy* sounds fine with all of the nouns in (25), and it occurred with several nouns of this type in *The New York Times* corpus (listed in (14)), including *family* and *lover*. Since *happy* is in attributive position here, we can conclude that feeling happy (at least for some kinds of happy feelings) is more of a long-lasting state of mind than feeling sad is. Certainly examples (26a) and (26b) describe cases in which the state of happiness persists over a long stretch of time.

As an attributive adjective, *happy* can also mean 'expressing pleasure or satisfaction', the meanings which it has with the nouns in (27) from the *New York Times* corpus.

(27) expression, face, feeling(s), mood, smile

I think both *unhappy* and *sad* can occur with nouns of this type--we can speak of *unhappy feelings* as well as *sad feelings*--but only *sad*, not *unhappy*, actually occurred significantly often with the nouns *face* and *smile*. Thus in this semantic area, the contrast between *happy* and *sad* is probably stronger than between *happy* and *unhappy*.

Another attributive use of *happy* is to describe things which make people happy. As LDOCE puts it, "A happy time, place, occasion etc. is one that makes you feel happy." Among the nouns which occur with *happy* in the *New York Times* corpus, there are several with which *happy* has this kind of meaning;

these are listed in (28) below.

- (28) conclusion, childhood, ending, fate, life, marriage(s), melody, occasions, prospect, scene(s)

With some of these nouns, *happy* contrasts with *sad* (for example, *fate*, *melody*, and *occasions*, which all occurred in the *New York Times* corpus with *sad*); and with others, it contrasts with *unhappy* (e.g., *childhood*, *marriage*, and *prospect*, which all occurred with *unhappy*). With a few nouns, such as *ending*, *happy* could contrast with either *sad* or *unhappy* depending on the context.

Another attributive meaning of *happy* is "fortunate, lucky" (OALD). It has this meaning with four nouns from the *New York Times* corpus: *accident(s)*, *circumstance*, *coincidence*, and *discovery*. The examples below show some more nouns which occur with *happy* in this sense:

- (29) a. He is in the happy position of never having to worry about money. (OALD)
- b. By happy coincidence, Robert met Richard and Julia and discovered that they were experiencing similar problems. (CCED)
- c. Conditions began to take a happy turn... (OED)
- d. I suspect that...the composition of *The Village Soothsayer* was happy fluke. (OED)

The sense of *happy* as 'fortunate' also may be implied when *happy* modifies some of the nouns in (28) above: e.g., a *happy childhood* is one in which the child is fortunate in being happy much of the time. This meaning of *happy* contrasts with one of the meanings of *unhappy*, 'unfortunate', which was discussed in section 4.3.4. *Sad* does not occur with nouns of this type.

Another area in which the meaning of *happy* contrasts with *unhappy* but

not *sad* is when happy means "well-suited to the situation; pleasing" (OALD). This is the meaning it has with two nouns from the *New York Times* corpus, *blend* and *combination*, as well as in the examples below:

- (30)a. not a happy choice of words/combination of colors (OALD)
- b. ...he gave them the happy name of flying saucers. (OED)
- c. A happy solution would be the more widespread use of the term 'hertz', meaning cycle-per-second. (OED)
- d. [For Swiss fondue] sesame seed sticks...make a happy accompaniment. (OED)
- e. Jumble, a happy corruption of John Bull, is the Englishman's nickname in the mouths of the thousands of Africans and West Indians who have flocked to London since the war. (OED)

The examples in (20) above showed a parallel use of *unhappy*.

There are a few uses of *happy* which have no counterpart in either *sad* or *unhappy*. One is found in sentences such as *I'll be happy to answer any questions if there are any* from *CCED*. In this type of sentence, *happy* means something like 'willing', and it is used when people want to be polite. This meaning is a natural pragmatic extension of the meanings of *happy* described so far, in that it is polite to offer to do something for someone else by saying that it will give us pleasure or satisfaction. Thus *happy to do something for someone* is similar to expressions such as *be pleased to do something* and *be glad to do something*. Probably there is no counterpart to this use with either *sad* or *unhappy* because it is not polite to strongly say that we do not want to do something.

Another use of *happy* which has no counterpart with either *unhappy* or *sad* is in conventional expressions such as *Happy Birthday* and *Happy New*

Year. Again, there are pragmatic reasons for this: we do not want to wish for *sad* or *unhappy* things to happen to us or other people, so these expressions have no opposites.

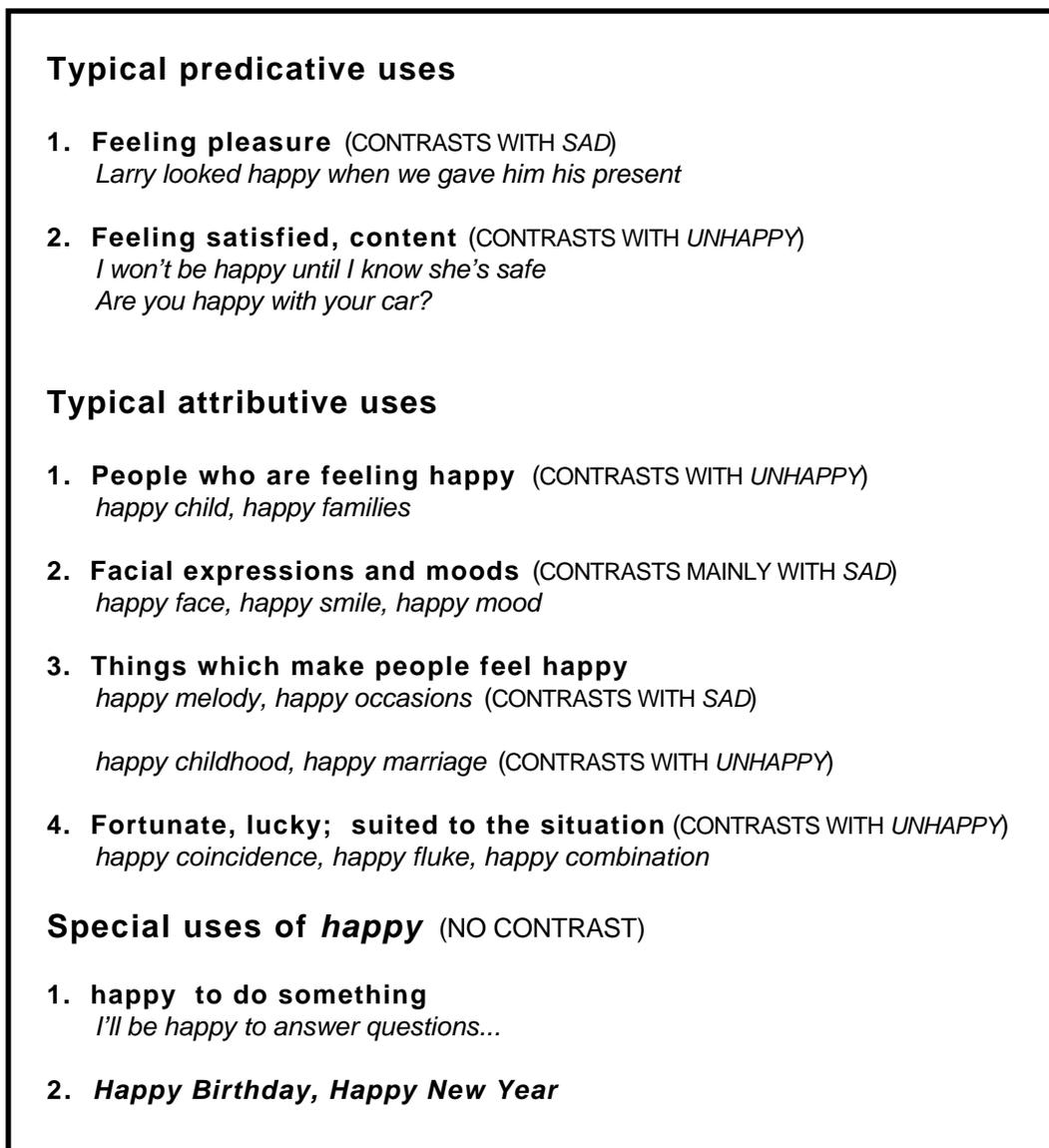


Figure 29. The semantic range of *happy*

Figure 30 above shows the semantic range of *happy*, indicating which

senses contrast with *sad* and which contrast with *unhappy*.

4.5 Conclusion: Why *happy* has two antonyms

In the last section, it was shown that *happy* shares a great deal of semantic range with both *sad* and *unhappy*. When the meaning of *happy* involves the idea of pleasure, that is when *happy* means 'feeling pleasure', 'causing pleasure' or 'expressing pleasure', it describes a kind of immediate emotional response and its opposite is *sad*. When *happy* means 'feeling satisfaction/contentment', 'causing satisfaction/contentment', 'fortunate, lucky' or 'well-suited', its opposite is *unhappy*. But why should there be a need for two different opposites for *happy*? Why isn't there just one word (either *sad* or *unhappy*), which contrasts with all the various meanings of *happy*?

The explanation, I believe, is related to the fact that *sad* is morphologically simple while *unhappy* is derived from *happy*. The next two sections develop this idea.

4.5.1 Happy and *sad*

In the two previous case studies, the notion of "semantic dimension" was employed without giving any definition of what a semantic dimension was. Actually, this seems to be the practice throughout the literature on antonymy; the notion seems intuitively obvious, so people use it without attempting to define it. In looking at the case of *happy* and *sad*, however, a discussion of the nature of semantic dimensions cannot be avoided. Both *happy* and *sad* describe distinct, basic emotions: *happy* describes a feeling related to pleasure and *sad* describes a feeling related to sorrow. Although native speakers certainly feel

that *happy* and *sad* are opposites, there is no clear label for the semantic dimension they share. Compare, for example, the label SIZE for the dimension shared by *large* and *small* or TEMPERATURE for *hot* and *cold*. There is no clear label for the dimension shared by *wet* and *dry* either, but in that case, it is possible to characterize the dimension as one which describes the presence or absence of moisture, just as the *clean/dirty* scale describes the presence or absence of dirt. In the case of *happy* and *sad*, however, there does not seem to be a single quality that is present in the situations described by *sad* but absent in the situations described by *happy* or vice versa. Lehrer and Lehrer (1982) sum up some of the questions that arise about the dimension of *happy* and *sad* in this way:

It is not even completely clear what the *happy-sad* scale is, but a reasonable conjecture is that it is a scale of hedonic tone. Since a person can be neither happy nor sad or neither happy nor unhappy, if there is a scale, there are mid-intervals. However, another possibility is that *happy* and *sad* name different incompatible emotions, and that these words belong to a lexical set along with *angry*, *frustrated*, *annoyed*, etc. According to this latter analysis, there is no single scale at all, and these words have a structure similar to the structure of color words. (Lehrer and Lehrer, 1982)

Let us examine these suggestions in a little more detail. Is *happy-sad* a scale of "hedonic tone," that is, it is a scale relating to pleasure? Well, pleasure seems to be part of the meaning of *happy*, especially in the senses of *happy* which contrast with *sad*. However, considering some of the situations in which people feel sad, repeated from (4) in (31) below, it does not seem that we can describe the meaning of *sad* as simply 'an absence of pleasure'.

(31) a. I was sad to hear of his death. (LLA)

b. I'd grown fond of our little house and was sad to leave it. (CCED)

- c. All the children were sad because their vacation was over for another year. (LLA)
 - d. I'm sad about my toys getting burned up in the fire. (CCED)
 - e. It always makes me sad when I hear about those poor people who have nowhere to live. (LLA)
- Instead, *sad* describes the presence of an element of sorrow, an emotion distinct from pleasure or happiness.

How about the second solution mentioned by Lehrer and Lehrer, that *sad* and *happy* are not really opposites, but just two out of a set of distinct emotions, which also includes *angry* and others? The examples of the uses of *happy* and *sad* do suggest that they are distinct emotions, however. English speakers have a strong feeling that these two adjectives have some kind of special relationship, a feeling that they do not have about *happy* and *angry* or *happy* and *worried*.

I think that the fact that *happy* and *sad* are seen as opposites is not a result of "semantics" alone; instead, it is a result of the way our emotions work. Happiness and sadness are incompatible emotions in the sense that we (usually) do not feel both emotions at the same time. Of course, this is also true of happiness and anger or happiness and worry. However, unlike those pairs of emotions, sadness and happiness are linked by the kinds of occasions in which they are felt. First of all, as *LLA* points out, people often feel sad "when a happy time is ending," as in examples (31b) and (31c). While it is not possible to say that *sad* simply means 'not happy', it does seem that sadness naturally follows in many cases when happiness ends. This is not true of anger or worry; there are not so many circumstances in which anger or worry naturally follow when a happy time ends.

Next, although *sadness* and *happiness* are distinct emotions, there is a certain "oppositeness" in the kinds of situations in which we often experience them. Thus we feel happy when we hear of births and weddings and sad when we hear of deaths and divorces; we feel happy when we receive something and sad when we lose something; we feel happy at the start of a love affair and sad at the end of one, and so on. This correspondence is seen in some of the nouns which occurred with both *happy* and *sad* in the corpus, e.g., *occasions* and *news*. There is not the same kind of correspondence between situations in which we feel happy and those in which we feel angry or worried, and there are no *angry occasions* or *worried events*.

Happy and *sad* are not unique among antonyms in describing distinct qualities. Cruse and Togia (1995) note several pairs of antonyms, including *happy/sad*, which form what they call "biscalar systems," that is, pairs in which each antonym is associated with its own semantic dimension. Other examples include *good/bad*, *sweet/sour*, and *beneficial/harmful*.¹¹ In all of these cases, the two antonyms describe qualities which are independent of each other, but are linked through our experience of the world. The case of *happy* and *unhappy*, however, is somewhat different, as will be seen in the next section.

4.5.2 *Happy and unhappy*

Unlike *sad*, *unhappy* is morphologically derived from its antonym, *happy*, and thus its meaning is dependent on the meaning of *happy* in a way that is not

¹¹Cruse and Togia (1995) describe the properties of biscalar systems with regard to properties such as committedness, and say that these properties support the conclusion that pairs such as *happy/sad* describe "distinct gradable properties," but they do not discuss the issue I am interested in here, the question of why *happy* and *sad* are antonyms (even though they describe distinct emotions).

true for *sad*. There has been a great deal of research on negative affixes in general and *un-* in particular, much of which is summarized in Horn (1989). Horn points out that logically, it seems like words with negative prefixes such as *un-* or *in-* should form contradictories, so that *unhappy* could be used to describe any emotion that was not happy (for instance, feelings of confusion, wonder, or excitement) but in fact negative prefixed words tend to be interpreted as contraries (gradable adjectives) rather than as contradictories. As a result, for example, *unwise* does not just mean 'not wise', it means something like 'foolish' and is not used to describe an average person who is neither wise nor foolish. *Unhappy* fits in with the general pattern; it means more than simply 'not happy'; instead it describes feelings that are definitely negative.

This case study showed *unhappy* has a wider range of meanings than *sad*. That is because *unhappy* does not describe an independent emotion in the same way that *sad* does, but instead describes meanings that contrast with the various senses of *happy*. In contrast to *happy* as 'lucky or fortunate', there is the meaning of *unlucky* as 'unlucky', and in contrast to *happy* as 'satisfied' or 'content', there is the meaning of *unhappy* as 'dissatisfied and discontent'. In this latter case, *unhappy* is associated with a range of emotions that may be the cause or the result of feelings of discontent and dissatisfaction, e.g., frustration may lead to dissatisfaction, which may in turn lead to anger.

The fact that the meaning of *unhappy* is so dependent on the meaning of *happy* suggests that, unlike *sad* and *happy*, *unhappy* and *happy* do share a semantic dimension. Intuitively, it makes sense to say that a step away from happiness (except perhaps 'happy' in the sense of 'feeling pleasure') is a step toward unhappiness. For example, if a person is *not completely happy* in the

sense of being 'not completely satisfied', it would be possible to say that he or she is *slightly unhappy*. Compare this to the case of *happy* and *sad*: If a person is *not completely happy* in the sense of feeling 'not completely full of pleasure', it does not imply that he or she is feeling somewhat sorrowful.

The fact that *sad* does not seem to share a semantic dimension with *happy* may explain why *unhappy* does not mean 'sorrowful'.¹² Another possible explanation may lie in the "Avoid Synonymy" principle (proposed in Kiparsky 1983) which says that derived words cannot be synonymous with existing lexical items; this would mean that if there were no word *sad*, the meanings of *unhappy* might be extended to include the meanings of *sad*, perhaps based on the relationship between the feelings of pleasure and sorrow described in section 5.4.1.

In this case study, it has been demonstrated that the notion of semantic range can help to explain why one word has two antonyms. This approach could probably be extended to other similar sets of adjectives such as *healthy/unhealthy/sick* and *wise/unwise/foolish*. I am confident that a study of these sets would show that near-synonyms such as *unhealthy* and *sick*; and *unwise* and *foolish*, differ in terms of semantic range, and that their single antonyms (*healthy* and *wise*) have a wider range than either of the near-synonyms. However, I do not have any strong impression about whether these sets follow the pattern of *happy/unhappy/sad* in having one pair of antonyms that share a semantic dimension and one pair with distinct dimensions.

Research on sets of this kind would be interesting to see.

¹²Of course, *unhappy* can mean 'depressed', which would suggest that *depression* is part of the scale of happiness while *sorrow* is not. The distinctions between *depressed*, *unhappy*, *sad* and *sorrowful* are quite subtle and could very well be the subject of their own case study of semantic range.