

CHART OF NSM SEMANTIC PRIMES [v20, 10 May 2022]

Semantic primes are the vocabulary of the Natural Semantic Metalanguage. The chart displays the English words for the primes and some of their combinatorial possibilities, according to NSM grammar. More complex combinations are also possible. In some languages, two primes e.g. FEEL and HEAR may be expressed by the same word. In some languages, a prime can have two or more exponents (allolexes), e.g. English *other* and *else*. Sometimes a combination of two or more primes, e.g. LIKE THIS, can be expressed by a single portmanteau word. [hello@nsm-approach.net]. For more resources visit <https://nsm-approach.net>

I~ME I want to do/know/say something I want this, I don't want this I don't know something bad can happen to me someone like me	YOU I want you to do/know/say something something bad can happen to you you are someone like me	SOMEONE this someone, the same someone, someone else, this other someone someone does/says something
SOMETHING~THING this something-thing, the same something-thing, something else something big, something small something of one kind	BODY people's bodies a body of one kind, bodies of two kinds something bad happens inside someone's body someone feels something in the body	PEOPLE these people, many people, some people, few people many people think like this: ... people can say ... people of one kind
KINDS people of one/two/many kinds this kind, the same kind, another kind, this other kind something/someone of one kind a place of one kind	(HAVE) PARTS people's bodies have many parts one/two of these parts ... something of this kind has two/many parts this part, the same part, this other part	WORDS many words, other words, one word words of one kind say something with (not with) words, say something in other words say these words

WANT I want this someone wants something someone wants to do/know/say something someone wants someone else to do/ know/say something someone wants something to happen I want it very much	DON'T WANT I don't want this someone doesn't want this someone doesn't want to do/say it someone doesn't want it to happen	FEEL someone feels something (good/bad) someone feels something (good/bad) in this part of the body someone feels like this
DO someone does something (to someone else) someone does something with something else/part of the body someone does something with someone else someone does something good (for someone else)/bad (to someone else)	SAY I say: ... someone says something (good/bad) (to someone) someone says something (good/bad) (about someone/something) someone says something like this: "..." someone says something with words someone says a word to someone	KNOW I know this someone knows it this someone knows something (many things) about someone/something people can know this [I know that... = it is like this: ..., I know it]
SEE someone sees someone/something (in a place) people can/can't see well in this place someone/people can/can't see this something people can see this place	HEAR someone hears something people can feel something bad when they hear this word	THINK someone thinks about someone else/ something someone thinks something good/bad about someone else/something someone thinks like this: "- -" many people think like this: "- -"

NOT~DON'T not good, not bad not like this I don't know someone can't do this	CAN something (good/bad) can happen this someone can/can't do it now someone can't do something someone can't not (= 'have to') do something it can be like this: ...	BECAUSE because of this it happened because this someone did something before ... not because of anything else
IF if it happens like this for some time, ... if you do this, ... if someone does something like this, ...	MAYBE maybe it is like this, maybe it is not like this maybe someone else can do it	LIKE~AS~WAY it happens like this: ... it is like this: ... someone thinks like this: "-" someone like me this someone does it like this it happens as this someone wants it is good if someone does/says it in this way, not in some other way
	VERY very big, very small, very good, very bad, very far, very near, a very short time, a very long time I want it very much (=very) very very big, very very good, very very far etc.	MORE~ANYMORE someone wants more, someone does more, someone knows more someone wants to know/say more (about it) one more, two more, many more not living anymore not like this anymore

THIS this someone/something, these people, this kind, this part at this time, in this place because of this it is like this: ...	THE SAME the same someone, the same thing, the same kind at the same time, in the same place someone says/does/thinks/knows/ wants/feels the same	OTHER~ELSE someone else, something else, at another time, somewhere else some other kinds, some other parts this other kind, this other part, this other someone, this other thing
ONE one someone, one thing, one kind one of these parts one of these things/people one in one place, at one time something of one kind one more thing	TWO two someones/people, two things, two kinds two of these parts something of this kind has two parts two of these things/people two more things	MUCH~MANY many people, many things, many kinds people's bodies have many parts something of this kind has many parts at many times, in many places much of this something (e.g. water) much more, many more
ALL all people, all things, all kinds all of these parts at all times, in all places all of this something (e.g. water)	SOME some people, some things, some kinds some of these parts some of these things/people at some times, in some places some of this something (e.g. water)	LITTLE~FEW few people, few things a little of this something (e.g. water) very little, very few

HAPPEN something happens something happens to someone something happens to something something happens somewhere (in a place) something happens in someone/ something	BE (SOMEWHERE) someone is somewhere (in a place) something is somewhere (in a place) someone is with someone else	LIVE someone lives for a long time many people live in this place this someone lives with someone else it is good if someone lives like this	DIE all people die at some time this someone died at this time/in this place after someone dies, ...
THERE IS there is something in this place there is someone in this place there are two/many kinds of ...	BE (SOMEONE/ SOMETHING) this someone is someone like me this is something of one kind this is something big/small I know who this someone is	(IS) MINE this thing (knife, shirt, etc.) is mine [this thing is someone else's = someone else can say about this thing: "it is mine"]	
MOVE someone moves (in this place) something moves in this place parts of this someone's body move as this someone wants	TOUCH something touches something else (somewhere) something touches part of someone's body someone/people can/can't touch this something	INSIDE inside this something inside this part of someone's body	

BIG something big a big place very big	SMALL something small a small place very small
GOOD something good, someone good something good happens do something good (for someone) feel something good this is good it is good if ...	BAD something bad, someone bad something bad happens do something bad (to someone) feel something bad this is bad it is bad if ...
TRUE this is true this is not true	

TIME~WHEN (at) this time, (at) the same time, at some other time, at this other time at some times, at many times at the time when ...	NOW something is happening here now when I say this now, ...	MOMENT it happens in one moment a moment before, a moment after at this moment
(FOR) SOME TIME some time before some time after it happens like this for some time someone does this for some time [during this time = at this time, for some time]	A LONG TIME a long time before a long time after a very long time [for a long time = for some time, a long time]	A SHORT TIME a short time before a short time after a very short time [for a short time = for some time, a short time]
BEFORE before this some time before a short time before a long time before	AFTER after this some time after a short time after a long time after	

PLACE~WHERE~ SOMEWHERE (in) this place, (in) the same place, somewhere else, (in) this other place in some places, in many places in the place where ... there are many places in this place	HERE something is happening here now people here	
ABOVE above this place far above this place someone above other people	BELOW below this place far below this place	ON (ONE) SIDE on this side, on the same side on one side, on two sides on all sides
NEAR near this place near someone	FAR far from this place far above/below this place	

Function words and portmanteaus
These are some of the main function words and portmanteau expressions in English-based NSM.
'in', e.g. in this place; in one moment
'at', e.g. at this time; at this moment
'of', e.g. one of these people; something of one kind
'with', e.g. do something with someone/something
'about', e.g. think/say about something/someone
'these': variant of 'this' used with a plural noun

'it' (dummy subject), e.g. it is good if ..., it is bad if ...
'it' for 'this thing'
'a lot': a variant of 'very much~many'
'well': an adverbial variant of 'good'
'such': portmanteau of 'like' and 'this'
'they' or 'them' for 'these people' or 'these things'
'everywhere': portmanteau based on 'all' and 'place'
'often', 'sometimes', 'always', 'never': portmanteaus based on quantifiers and 'time'
singular 'they' for 'this someone' (if you want to use this portmanteau, please note it in the text)

Using NSM in explications
Don't include any complex English-specific words, no matter how common and seemingly basic, e.g. and, or, make.

Ensure that you use semantic primes only in allowable syntactic frames. Do not resort to non-NSM syntax even if English grammar allows it. For example, avoid 'do something about it' and 'feel good/bad about something'; semantic primes DO and FEEL do not have any "about" valency.

Avoid the following non-universal constructions:
- relative clauses (e.g. someone who did this)
- comparative (e.g. better than, more than)
- indirect speech (e.g. this someone said that ...)

Whenever possible, explications should be written entirely in semantic primes but some explications require use of semantic molecules in addition to primes. Semantic molecules are a well-defined set of non-primitive meanings that function as units in the meanings of more complex concepts.