

## THE MEANING OF THE WORD 'CRY' ON CORPUS OF CONTEMPORARY AMERICAN ENGLISH: SYNTACTIC AND SEMANTIC STUDY

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Volume 5

Nomor 2

March 2021

Page 388-397

### Abstract:

This research title is "**The Meaning of The Word 'Cry' on Corpus of Contemporary American English: Syntactic and Semantic Study**". The purposes of this research are to analyze the syntactic category and to analyze the meaning of the word 'cry' on Corpus of Contemporary American English. The methods used in this research are distributional method to analyze the syntactic category and identity method to analyze the meaning of the word 'cry'. The steps for the research are collect the data which is the sentence that has the word 'cry' on Corpus of Contemporary American English, then analyze the syntactic category and the meaning of the word 'cry'. The data source is the sentence that has the word 'cry' on the Corpus of Contemporary American English website. The theoretical basis used in identifying syntactic categories are O'Grady's (1993) theory and Chaer's (1994) theory to identify the types of meanings. The results showed that out of 32 data that have been analyzed, the lexical category was obtained, namely 25 verb data (78.12%) and 7 noun data (21.87%). Meanwhile, the types of meanings found are 11 data of lexical meaning and grammatical meaning (34.37%), 10 data of contextual meaning (31.25%), 8 data of lexical meaning (25%), 2 data of contextual meaning and grammatical meaning (6.25%), and 1 data of connotative meaning (3.12%).

### Keyword:

Cry, Syntax, Semantics



Cite this as: Fitriyani, A., N., & Nugraha, D., N., S., (2021). The Meaning of The Word 'Cry' on Corpus of Contemporary American English: Syntactic and Semantic Study, <https://doi.org/10.33197/ej lutka. vol5. iss2. 2020. 2655. 4585>

### Article History:

Received: 15 January 2021; Revised: 15 February 2021; Accepted: 25 March 2021

## INTRODUCTION

Language is the most important tool of communication. The language also can be a tool to express something, such as opinion and experience, or to express feelings or emotions. Hornby (1975) states, "Language is a human and not instinctive method of communicating ideas, feelings, and desires by means of system of sounds and sound of symbols."

Language has universal, dynamic, arbitrary, and systematic characteristics. Every language has its own rule and regulations which are the things that characterize how the language-speaking society presents it. As a non-native English speaker, there are misunderstandings in using English because of difficulties in choosing vocabulary or using grammar.

Corpus of Contemporary American English is a useful website for finding accurate data. Davies (2010) states that The Corpus of Contemporary American English is the first large corpus that consists of several languages which have been designed and built from the ground up as 'corpus monitor' which can be used to accurately track and study the recent changes in the language. On the Corpus of Contemporary American English website, can find a lot of data by only write one word that is wanted, so that it easier to find the data.

For example, the word 'cry' in this sentence, "His selfless social advocacy was a far **cry** from his youthful hedonistic lifestyle, one that he admits should have caught up with him years later." which find on Rolling Stone magazine has no lexical meaning. In that sentence, there is the word 'far' followed by the word 'cry', both words cannot be separated and have meaning 'something notably different' so that the word 'cry' in that sentence has contextual meaning, while in this sentence, "I wasn't sure whether to laugh or **cry** so I did a lot of both." which find in Huffington Post has lexical meaning or the real meaning which is 'to produce tears because of unhappy or hurt'.

Because of this, the author wants to know about the meaning of the word 'cry' on Corpus of Contemporary American English based on the explanation theories. In this research, the author will discuss the word 'cry' which has a lot of meanings so that there is no misunderstanding. Therefore, the author interested to study the word 'cry' on Corpus of Contemporary American English.

### **LITERATURE REVIEW**

Syntax is a branch of linguistics that discusses how to combine words into group of words or phrases and form sentences. Verhaar (1996) states that syntax is a language study which discusses the relationship between words in speech. This statement is supported by Simatupang and Adzani (2019) state, "Syntax is branch of linguistics that studies the relationships between words and how words are arranged or arranged so as to form a larger construction that is, phrases, clauses, and sentences."

Syntax is the study of word structures that form phrases, clauses, and sentences. Radford states that syntax is the study of how phrases and sentences are composed by several words and how to answer the question "how are sentences structured and how the grammar operation by which its components words are combined to form the complete sentence.

From the statements above, the author can conclude that syntax is the study of word arrangement which forms phrases, clauses, and sentences.

Syntax concerns the relationships between words and the larger or bigger units. According to Nugraha (2016), syntactic units consist of phrase, clause, and sentence.

#### a. Word

Word is the smallest unit in syntactic order. Lyons (in Pratiwi, 2018) states that word can be considered as the pure form of spoken and written, for example, composite expression which combines forms of meaning. Words are divided into word classes (part of speech), there are nouns, verbs, adverbs, adjectives, pronoun, conjunction, and interjection.

#### b. Phrase

Phrase is the syntactic unit that has more than one unit syntactic but smaller than a clause. As stated by Trask (1999), "A grammatical unit which is smaller than a clauses. The term phrase is an ancient one, and it has long been used to denote a grammatical unit which typically (though not invariably) consist two or more words, but which does not contain all of the thing found in a clause." Quirk, et al. (in Naomi, 2014) divided phrases into five groups, there are noun phrase, adverb phrase, adjective phrase, and preposition phrase.

#### c. Clause

Clause is the syntactic unit that has subject and verb. According to Swan (1997), "Clause is a part of a sentence which contains a subject and verb, usually joined to the rest of sentence by conjunction. Clause is also sometimes used for structure containing participle and infinitive verb (with subject or no conjunction)." That statement is supported by Richard, et al. (1985) that state clause is a group of words that has subject and finite verb. In English, clause is divided into independent clauses and dependent clauses.

#### d. Sentence

Sentence is the largest syntactic unit which in it there are word classes and grammatical function. As stated by Richard, et al. (1985), "Sentence is the largest unit of grammatical organization within parts of speech (e.g. noun, verbs, adverbs, and grammatical classes (e.g. words, phrases, clauses)) and said to function." Quirk, et al. (1985) divided sentence into three kinds, there are simple sentence, compound sentence, and complex sentence.

Syntactic category is syntactic content in form of words or phrases. O'Grady (1993) divides syntactic category into two categories, there are lexical category and non-lexical category. Lexical category divides into five, there are noun (N), verb (V), adjective (Adj.), adverb (Adv.), and preposition (P). The non-lexical category also divides into five, there are determiner (Det.), degree word (Deg.), qualifier (Qual), auxiliary (Aux), and conjunction.

Syntactic function is the relationship between structures and language elements as seen from the presentations in clauses or utterances. According to Downing (2006), syntactic function is consists of subject, verb, object, and complement.

Semantics is a branch of linguistics that learns about meaning. As stated by Hurford and Heasley (1983), "Semantics is the study of meaning in language." That statement is supported by Kreidler (1998) states that semantics is the study of meaning and semantic linguistics is how to organize language and convey meaning.

Meaning is a meaning of a word or symbol. According to Saeed (1997), "The simplest theory of meaning is to claim that semantics is reference i.e. that to give the meaning of a word one shows what it donate." That stated is supported by Lyons (1995) who state that meaning is ideas or concept which can be transformed from hearer's mind by manifesting as the form of one language or other. By the meaning that has been described, meaning can be interpreted based on different views. According to Chaer (1994), meaning consists of lexical meaning, grammatical meaning, contextual meaning, referential and non-referential meaning, denotative meaning, connotative meaning, associative meaning, words, terms, idiom, and proverbs' meaning.

a. Lexical Meaning

The lexical meaning is a word that can be found in the dictionary and can stand on its own. Lyons (1981) states, "The term lexical meaning is to be interpreted as the meaning of lexeme." As an example, "cat" the lexeme from the cat is a furry animal, has four legs, has a tail and mustache.

b. Grammatical Meaning

Grammatical meaning is a meaning that occurs because of grammatical processes, such as affectation or tense. Croft (2000) states that grammatical meaning the grammatical meaning through grammatical processes: diachronic processes in which lexical meanings change into grammatical meanings, it is what distinguishes lexical meanings from grammatical meanings.

c. Contextual Meaning

Contextual meaning is a meaning which depends on its context and where the word its used. As stated by Cruse (1995), "Contextual meaning is the pull set of normality relations which a lexical item contacts with all conceivable contexts."

d. Conceptual and Connotative Meaning

According to Leech (1981), conceptual meaning or sometimes called denotative or cognitive meaning is the central factor in linguistic communication. In the other words, the conceptual or denotative meaning is the real or original meaning. Connotative meaning is the meaning that does not directly indicate meaning in referring to a thing or object. Leech (1974) states, "Connotative meanings usually contain feelings, memories, and to other object."

According to Cheng (in Nugraha, 2019) linguistics corpus works by analyzing through a compilation process based on categories and units of analysis. The next steps, the most important categories and units within the scope of linguistics corpus are word lists, keywords, and concordances. The word lists contains the number of words contained linguistics data and the number of frequency that appears in source texts. Beside the word lists, there are keywords which are the collections of words with the highest frequency occurrences of words that are considered to represent the main topic of the text, while the concordances is word lists that assemble with the other words and establish new meaning based on the context.

Corpus of Contemporary American English was created by Mark Davies and has more than 500 million words in American English corpus. According to Yusu (2014), Corpus of Contemporary American English has been available online since 2008 and is the largest free English corpus and has significant advantages over the other free online corpus in terms of vocabulary studies. Corpus of Contemporary American English has more than one billion words on texts, such as

spoken, fiction, magazine, newspaper, academic text, television and film subtitle, blog, and the other webs.

**METHOD**

The object of this research is to analyze the sentences that have the word ‘cry’ in it which is taken from the blog on Corpus of Contemporary American English website. These sentences will be collected as data. Then, those data will be classified based on the category syntactic and then analyze the meaning contained in each data.

The method used in this research is descriptive. According to Kothari (1985), descriptive research includes surveys and fact-findings of various investigations. The main characteristic is the researcher has not to control over the variable; the researcher only reports what was happen. In analytic research, in the other side, the research must use facts or information that already available analyzes it to make a critical evaluation of the material/study.

The method used to analyze the category syntactic is the distribution method. Sudaryanto (in Anggraeni, 2019) states that the distribution method is a method to analyze data which the determinant is the part of its language. The determinant in the work of distribution method is a part or element of the language of the research object itself, such as word (preposition, adverb, etc.), syntactic function (subject, object, verb, etc.), clauses, syllables, pitch, and so on. And the method used to analyze the meaning is the identity method. According to Mahsun (2005), the identity method is the analysis method by comparing lingual elements. As an equivalent reference, the author uses online dictionary <https://www.oxfordlearnersdictionaries.com/> and <https://www.merriam-webster.com/> also The English-Indonesian Dictionary by John M. Echols and Hassan Shadily (2020) as a reference Indonesian equivalent.

**RESULTS AND DISCUSSION**

**A. Cry as Verbs**

**Data 1**

Favre is the son of a football coach and is always harder on himself than anyone else. Where were the players willing to approach him and say, that’s OK, you’ll get it next time like Greg Jennings did as he learned to work with Brett. Favre showed great leadership through the Titans and New England. When he was hurt, he didn’t whine or cry. He’s the Ironman.  
 (“Brett Favre and Things to Think About - NYTimes.com.” 2012.  
<http://fifthdown.blogs.nytimes.com/2009/02/10/brett-favre-and-things-to-think-about/>)

**Table 1**

	He	didn't	cry	or	whine
	S	V			
<b>Category</b>	N (Lexical)	Aux. (Non-Lexical)	V (Lexical)	Conj. (Non-Lexical)	V (Lexical)

Syntactically, the word cry in the sentence “When he was hurt, he didn’t whine or cry.” is a verb. A verb is included in the lexical category, so it can be said that the word ‘cry’ in this sentence belongs to the lexical category.

The word cry in the sentence “When he was hurt, he didn’t whine or cry.” means crying or tears due to sadness or pain, so semantically, the word cry in this sentence has a lexical meaning which has original meaning.

**Data 2**

I had a conversation with my father that included saying out loud the total cost of my education (my personal loans and the parent loans they had borrowed) and I started to cry out of regret.  
 (“Daily Kos: Tales of Debt. Coming of Age In the Aftermath of Big Bank.” 2012.  
<http://www.dailykos.com/story/2012/11/17/1162729/-Tales-of-Debt-Coming-of-Age-In-the-Aftermath-of-Big-Bank-Bailouts>)

Table 2

	I	started to	cry out	of	regret
	S	V			O
Category	N (Lexical)	Adv. (Lexical)	V (Lexical)	Prep. (Non- Lexical)	N (Lexical)

Syntactically, the word cry in the sentence “I had a conversation with my father that included saying out loud the total cost of my education (my personal loans and the parent loans they had borrowed) and I started to cry out of regret.” is a verb which is followed by the word ‘out’ so it becomes a phrasal verb. A verb is included in the lexical category, so it can be said that the word cry in this sentence belongs to the lexical category.

The word cry in the sentence “I had a conversation with my father that included saying out loud the total cost of my education (my personal loans and the parent loans they had borrowed) and I started to cry out of regret.” is followed by the word ‘out’ (preposition) so that the word cry out cannot be separated. Cry out meaning are to make a loud sound because of pain, fear, surprise, etc. The word cry in this sentence has connotative meaning which contains a feeling of regret.

### Data 3

He cries because he's hungry.

(“5 tricks to find out what happens to the baby | Child Harmony,” 2012. <http://childinharmony.com/5-tricks-to-find-out-what-happens-to-the-baby.html>)

Table 3

	He	cries	because	he	is	hungry
	S	V	Conj.	S	V	
Category	N (Lexical)	V (Lexical)	Conj. (Non- Lexical)	N (Lexical)	Aux. (Non- Lexical)	V (Lexical)

Syntactically, the word cry in the sentence “He cries because he's hungry.” is a verb, but because the subject is in the third person so that the word cry is given the suffix –s. The word cry in this sentence is a finite verb because ‘cries’ are used in the present tense and is attached with the subject ‘He’. A verb is included in the lexical category, so it can be said that the word cry in this sentence belongs to the lexical category.

The word cry in the sentence “He cries because he's hungry.” means cry because of sadness or pain. The word cry in this sentence has lexical meaning, but semantically, the word cry in this sentence went through the grammatical process with the addition of the suffix –s because the subject is the third person, so it can be said the word cry in this sentence has grammatical meaning.

### Data 4

I stumble through my daily existence right now, a heavy funk settled deep in my chest. I cry spontaneously sometimes - on the way to or from work, or whenever I'm alone and my thoughts start spinning worst case possibilities.

(“Getting Lean, Strong and Healthy: I don't know how to walk the walk”, 2012. <http://eatbreathemove.blogspot.com/2012/10/i-dont-know-how-to-walk-walk.html>)

Table 4

	I	cry	spontaneously	sometimes
	S	V	Adv.	
Category	N (Lexical)	V (Lexical)	Adv. (Lexical)	Adv. of frequency (Non- Lexical)

Syntactically, the word 'cry' in the sentence, "I cry spontaneously sometimes..." is a verb and it's followed by adverb. A verb is included to the lexical category so it can be said that the word 'cry' in this sentence belongs to lexical category.

The word 'cry' in the sentence, "I cry spontaneously sometimes..." means to produce tears from your eyes because you are unhappy or hurt so semantically, the word 'cry' in this sentence has lexical meaning.

#### Data 5

Sarah dear. Thank you for your humbling and sweet intro. Made me smile and cry (in a good way). I'm so glad our paths crossed and we roomed together in Haiti. It was a God thing for sure. Thanks for gifting me with your space today. I'm humbled.  
("In which Mary DeMuth wonders what is behind our need to be right." 2012. <http://sarahbessey.com/in-which-mary-demuth-wonders-what-is-behind-our-need-to-be-right-and-a-giveaway/>)

Table 5

	(it)	Made	me	smile	and	cry
	(S)	V	O			
Category	N (Lexical)	Adj. (Lexical)	N (Lexical)	V (Lexical)	Conj. (Non- Lexical)	V (Lexical)

Syntactically, the word 'cry' in the sentence, "Made me smile and cry (in a good way)." is a verb. A verb is included to the lexical category so it can be said the word 'cry' in this sentence belongs to lexical category.

The word 'cry' in the sentence, "Made me smile and cry (in a good way)." means to produce tears from your eyes because you are unhappy or hurt, but in this sentence the word 'cry' in this sentence means that tears of happiness, it can be seen in the sentence "(in a good way)" which appears after the word cry so semantically, the word 'cry' in this sentence has contextual meaning.

#### B. Cry as Nouns

##### Data 6

I LITERALLY LIVE WITH A PACK OF RECENTLY REINTRODUCED GRAY WOLVES IN MY BACK YARD! Literally. I hear the newborn cubs all pitching and whimpering and crying whenever Mom comes home with breakfast, lunch or dinner. "Their" den is no more than a hundred FEET across a small valley between two hills separated by a dry ravine. I hear them every day.  
("Would Real Wolves Act Like the Wolves of 'The Grey'? - News Watch." 2012. <http://newswatch.nationalgeographic.com/2012/02/03/would-real-wolves-act-like-the-wolves-of-the-grey/>)

Table 6

	I	hear	the	newborn	cubs	all	pitching and whimpering and crying
	S	V	O				
Category	N (Lexical)	V (Lexical)	Det. (Non- Lexical)	Adj. (Lexical)	N (Lexical)	Adv. (Lexical)	N (Lexical), Conj. (Non- Lexical)

Syntactically, the word ‘cry’ in the sentence, “...Literally. I hear the newborn cubs all pitching and whimpering and crying whenever Mom comes home with breakfast, lunch or dinner. ‘Their’ den is no more than a hundred FEET across a small valley between two hills separated by a dry ravine. I hear them every day.” is a noun. A noun is included in the lexical category, so it can be said the word ‘cry’ in this sentence belongs to the lexical category.

The word ‘cry’ in the sentence, “...Literally. I hear the newborn cubs all pitching and whimpering and crying whenever Mom comes home with breakfast, lunch or dinner. ‘Their’ den is no more than a hundred FEET across a small valley between two hills separated by a dry ravine. I hear them every day.” has contextual meaning because the word ‘cry’ in this sentence means ‘the characteristic sound or call of an animal’. However, the word ‘cry’ in this sentence went through a grammatical process with the addition of -ing so semantically, the word cry in this sentence also has grammatical meaning.

#### Data 7

Caribbean cruises and they were all wonderfully relaxing and enjoyable, but I agree that they are a far cry from what I consider "traveling." (The one exception is that on the Baltic cruise we were able to take a full day tour of St. Petersburg without having to worry about visas, which was very nice. I probably would not have gone to Russia if it weren't for that).

(“Cruise Culture: Thoughts on the Nature of Mass Tourism | Nomadic.” 2012. <http://www.nomadicmatt.com/travel-blogs/cruise-culture-thoughts-on-the-nature-of-mass-tourism/>)

Table 7

	I	agree	that	they	are	a	far cry	from	what I consider "traveling"
	S	V	Conj.	S	V	A			
Category	N (Lexical)	V (Lexical)	Conj. (Non- Lexical)	N (Lexical)	Aux. (Non- Lexical)	Det. (Non- Lexical)	N (Lexical)	Perp. (Non- Lexical)	Noun Phrase

Syntactically, the word ‘cry’ in the sentence, “...I agree that they are a far cry from what I consider ‘traveling.’” is a verb, but beforehand there’s the word ‘far’ so it becomes a unified word in the form of a noun. A noun is included in the lexical meaning so it can be said that the word far cry belongs to the lexical category.

The word ‘cry’ in the sentence, “...I agree that they are a far cry from what I consider ‘traveling.’” has no lexical meaning because there is the word ‘far’ before the word ‘cry’ so those words cannot be separated. Far cry means ‘something notably different or a long distance’, in this sentence far cry means ‘something notably different’ so semantically, the word ‘cry’ in this sentence has contextual meaning.

#### Data 8

I looked at the bull. He had this innocence that all animals have in their eyes, and he looked at me with this pleading. It was like a cry for justice, deep down inside of me.

(“Álvaro Múnera: This photo is not what it seems... – The Last Arena.” 2012. <http://fiskeharrison.wordpress.com/2012/07/25/this-photo-is-not-what-it-seems/>)

Table 8

	It	was	like	a	cry	for	justice
	S	V					O
Category	N (Lexical)	Aux. (Non- Lexical)	Prep. (Non- Lexical)	Det. (Non- Lexical)	N (Lexical)	Prep. (Non- Lexical)	N (Lexical)

Syntactically, the word ‘cry’ in the sentence, “It was like a cry for justice...” is a verb and followed by the preposition ‘for’. Cry for is a noun. A noun is included in the lexical category so it can be said that the word ‘cry’ in this sentence belongs to the lexical category.

The word ‘cry’ in the sentence, “It was like a cry for justice...” means ‘to need or require (something) very much’ so it can be said that the bull was like require for justice so semantically, the word ‘cry’ in this sentence has contextual meaning.

#### Data 9

Oh wait darn, that's being a cry baby to point out that you (un) intentionally misread people you don't like for the purposes of criticizing them and don't actually contribute much positive at all isn't it.

(Aaaaaieeee! Why did you have to tell me that? | Pharyngula, 2012. <http://freethoughtblogs.com/pharyngula/2012/11/15/aaaaaieeee-why-did-you-have-to-tell-me-that/>)

Table 9

	That's	being	a	cry baby
	S	V	O	
Category	Det. (Non- Lexical)	V (Lexical)	Det. (Non- Lexical)	N (Lexical)

Syntactically, the word cry in the sentence, “Oh wait darn, that's being a cry baby to point out that you (un) intentionally misread people you don't like for the purposes of criticizing them and don't actually contribute much positive at all isn't it.” is a noun. A noun is included to the lexical category so it can be said that the word ‘cry’ in this sentence belongs to lexical category.

The word cry baby in the sentence, “Oh wait darn, that's being a cry baby to point out that you (un) intentionally misread people you don't like for the purposes of criticizing them and don't actually contribute much positive at all isn't it.” means a person, especially a child who cries too often or without a good reason, but in this sentence the word cry baby means a loser or coward so semantically, the word cry baby has contextual meaning.

#### CONCLUSION

Based on the results of the analysis in Finding and Results regarding the syntactic category and meaning of the word cry contained in the Corpus of Contemporary American English, the author conclude that the types of syntactic categories found out of 32 data on the word ‘cry’ in Corpus of Contemporary America English, namely lexical category as verbs and nouns. The result are, the word ‘cry’ as verbs was found 25 data (78.12%) categorized as lexical category and the word ‘cry’ as nouns was found 7 data (21.87%) categorized as lexical category.

The types of the meanings found out of 32 data on the word 'cry' in Corpus of Contemporary American English are lexical meaning was found 8 data (25%), contextual meaning was found 10 data (31.25%), connotative meaning was found 1 datum (3.1%), lexical meaning and grammatical meaning was found 11 data (34.37%), and contextual meaning and grammatical meaning was found 2 data (6.25%).

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