

Abstract

The topic of this thesis are adjectival antonyms in child-directed fiction. The primary aim of the thesis is to compare the usage of antonyms in adult fiction and child-directed fiction on the basis of a contextual co-occurrence of antonyms. The two areas of focus are the discourse functions of antonymy and the canonicity of antonyms. The thesis presents an analysis of antonyms identified in the context of 51 most frequent adjectives in a corpus of fiction written for children.

The thesis is structured into three major parts. The first part provides a theoretical framework which summarizes the research of the discourse functions of antonymy and reviews the methods of measuring antonym canonicity. The second, methodological part, explains the methodology and describes the data used for the purposes of this study. The selection of data relies mostly on manual classification of the concordance lines. The third, analytical part, analyses and classifies the antonyms found in the corpus of child-directed fiction and compares them with selective samples extracted from adult fiction. A comparison of the most frequent adjectives in both corpora is also provided.

Keywords: antonymy, discourse functions, antonym canonicity, ancillary antonymy, coordinated antonymy