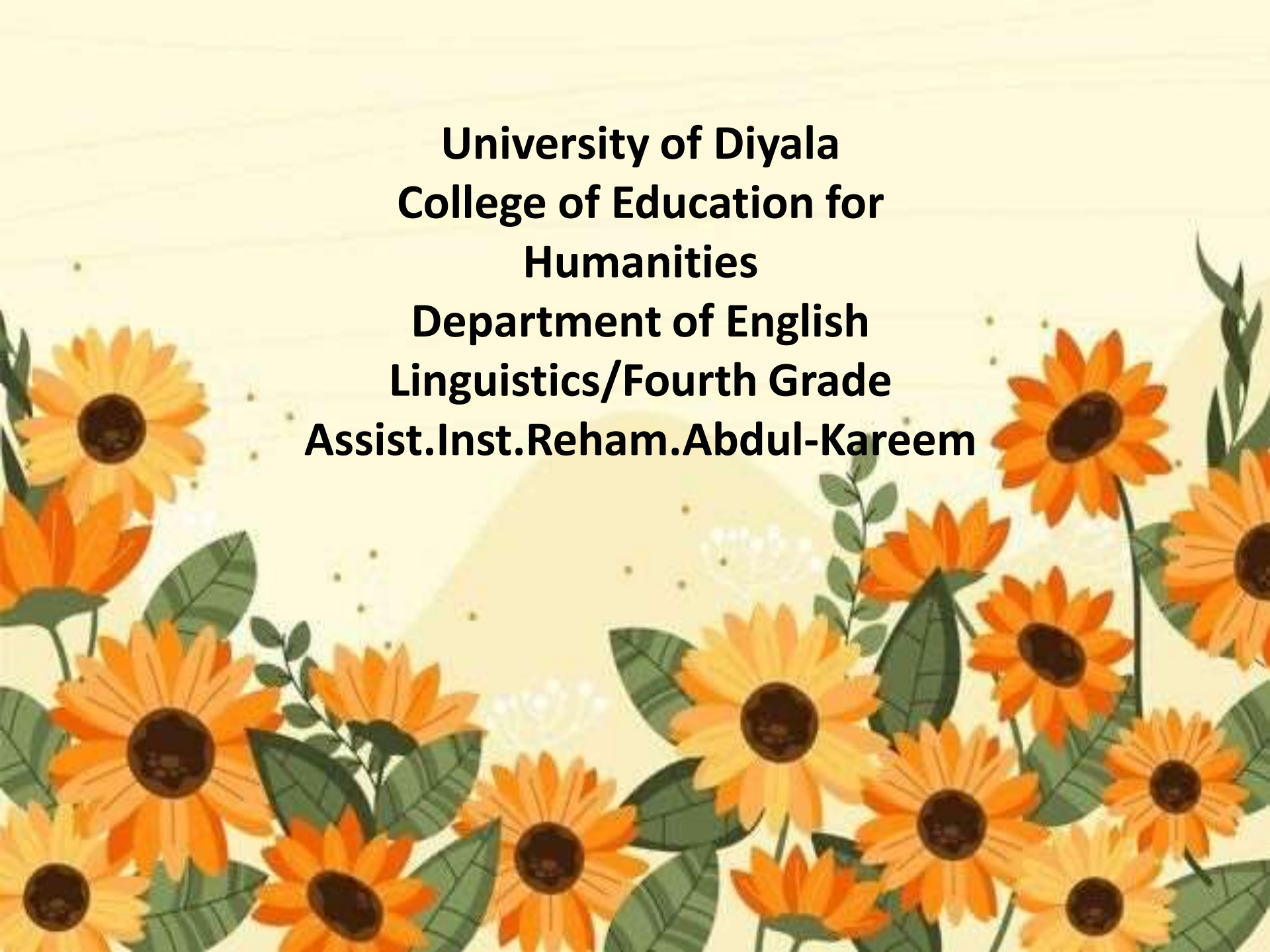
University of Diyala
College of Education for Humanities
Department of English
Linguistics/Fourth Grade
Assist.Inst.Reham.Abdul-Kareem



What is Semantics?

Semantics: is the study of meaning in language, including words, phrases, and sentences.

Why it matters: It helps us understand how people interpret and use language to communicate ideas.

Example: The word “bank” can mean a financial institution or the side of a river depending on context.

📌 **Semantics** answers the question: “What does this word or sentence mean?

What are Lexical Relations?

Lexical relations describe how words are systematically related to one another in meaning.

Purpose: Helps organize vocabulary in the brain and supports language understanding.

Main types: Synonymy, Antonymy, Hyponymy, Polysemy, Homonymy.

📌 **Lexical relations** show how words connect in meaning—like synonyms or opposites.

Synonymy

Synonyms are words with similar or identical meanings.

Examples:

Big ↔ Large

Begin ↔ Start

Note: Context matters , synonyms may not always be interchangeable.

📌 **Synonymy enriches language by giving us multiple ways to say the same thing.**

Antonymy

Antonyms are words with opposite meanings.

Types:

Gradable: Have degrees (hot ↔ cold)
Complementary: Either-or (dead ↔ alive)
Relational: Paired actions (buy ↔ sell)
Examples: Fast ↔ Slow, Win ↔ Lose

📌 **Understanding opposites** **helps us define and describe things more precisely**.

Hyponymy

A “type-of” relationship where one word is a more specific example of another.

Examples :
Rose, Tulip → types of Flower
Dog, Cat → types of Animal

📌 **Hyponyms** are useful for categorizing and organizing vocabulary hierarchically.

Polysemy

A word that has multiple related meanings.

Examples:

Head: part of the body, leader of a team, top of a bed
Paper: writing material, a newspaper, a research article

📌 **Polysemy reflects how language evolves to give one word multiple, related uses.**

Homonymy

Homonyms are words that are spelled or pronounced the same, but have unrelated meanings.

Types:

Homophones: sound alike (flour ↔ flower)
Homographs: spelled the same (bat -animal/sports)

📌 **Homonyms can cause confusion but also add richness to language.**

Summary & Conclusion

Semantics: Helps us understand how meaning works in language.

Lexical Relations organize words based on meaning :Synonymy, Antonymy, Hyponymy, Polysemy, Homonymy.

Applications:

Language teaching
Translation
Artificial intelligence

✓ **Understanding semantics** improves communication, language learning, and even how computers understand human language.

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