

Focusing on Verbs of Perception

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Abstract

This article is concerned with the manner in which second-language (L2) learners are taught polysemous and synonymous English words using material from a dictionary that adopts the idea of *core meaning*. It proposes the material and the manner in which that material should be presented to explain the relationship between the two uses of look as in(1) *look* implying “*Look* at the picture” and “You *look* happy,” and (2) the difference between *look* and *see*. The idea of *core meaning* is adopted to allow learners to grasp the complete meaning of the word and indicate the range of its usage. The example items are introduced in the network of the verbs of perception as a whole rather than separately.

Introduction

Explicit vocabulary instruction is essential for beginning language students, whose lack of vocabulary limits their ability to use the language effectively. Accordingly, researchers (Sinclair, 1991; Willis, 1990) have devoted considerable attention to what comprises a core vocabulary. In addition, many researchers have focused their attention on the manner in which vocabulary should be presented. For instance Luppescu and Day (1993), in their study of Japanese students of English, found that the use of bilingual dictionaries often resulted in vocabulary learning. If, however, a word had multiple entries, the use of dictionaries seemed to have actually confused learners. According to Grabe and Stoller (1997, p.114), “Common words with many meanings [senses] required some ambiguity tolerance and would have to be looked up again when they reappeared...” Nesi and Meara (1994) pointed out that a number of errors made by adult EFL learners seemed to be the result of over-reliance on a single definition of the several that are provided in the dictionary. Coady (1977), drawing on the above researches, emphasized the need for more instruction on the best manner in which to use a dictionary.

The material and the manner in which that material should be offered to learners is a subject that needs to be resolved. McKeown (1993) has placed importance on providing overall essence, or an all-inclusive, exhaustive

definition and not fragments of a word in a dictionary. Nation (2001, p.90) has suggested that it is necessary to “draw attention to the generalisable underlying meaning of a word,” that is, “in providing an explanation of a word, the teacher should try to show what is common in the different uses of the word.”

A look at the manner in which Japanese L2 learners acquire the meaning system of the target language indicates that they do not seem to have grasped the full extent of the target word although they may understand the prototypical meaning of each word. When learning a word, it is probable that they learn only the example sentence to which they are exposed and overextend the usage of this word to an incorrect context. For example, they may use *look at* instead of *see* in a sentence like, “*Can you look at the white house over there?”

When we shift our focus from the learners to the words, we encounter words that have one form but seemingly different meanings, such as “(You) look at the picture” and “You look happy.” In the former sentence, “you” are the one who is going to “look” at the picture while in the latter, “I” am the one who “looks” at you and judges that you are happy. Furthermore, certain words have two forms but have similar meanings, such as *look* and *see*. How do we present and explain these examples to learners? From an educational point of view, it is important to combine methods that introduce examples and those that enable learners to grasp the complete meaning or image of a word. What is the material that would be most effective in promoting learners’ understanding of the complete meaning of the English word to avoid overextension or under utilization, and what is the most effective manner in which this material can be presented? In this paper, we would like to focus on verbs of perception which are used in diverse ways, highlight their common qualities, and place them within the bigger picture of a network.

Core Meaning

The concept of *core meaning* underlies this discussion. Drawing on Miller (1978) and Ruhl (1979), Tanaka (1990) points out the importance of separating context-sensitive and context-free semantic content. According to Miller, a large amount of contextual information is included in a dictionary entry instead of merely the core concept. Ruhl points out that most common words, such as *come*, *go*, *bring* and *take*, or *of*, *to*, *from*, *on*, *in* and *at* have only one single general meaning. He argues that “one particular shortcoming of dictionaries is a habit of overspecifying, of attributing to words meaning that in part is supplied by the context (p.1).” *Core meaning* or *concept* comprises context-free semantic content and is differentiated from the contextual sense. It includes the common qualities underlying each contextual sense. This idea of

core meaning is similar to the idea of “concept and referents” used by Nation (2001). Nation points out that “having a clear idea of the underlying meaning of a word running through its related uses, and...being aware of the range of particular uses it has.... contribute[s] to being able to understand a word when it is used in a new situation, and being able to use a word in creative ways.(p.102)” *Core meaning* is a pedagogical device that presents the complete meaning of a word. It should help prevent language transfer or overcome the danger of cutting the meaning of an English word into pieces when a learner compares and contrasts it with a corresponding translation (Tanaka, 1987; Tanaka & Kawade, 1989) especially in verbs and prepositions. For example, we present below various sentences are presented below using *run*, along with Japanese translations. (Sentences are quoted from the E-Gate English-Japanese dictionary or have been composed by the authors, except when mentioned otherwise.)

1. She ran first [second, last] in the 50 meter race. “hashiru”
2. My stocking ran again. “(kutsushita ga) densen suru”
3. A small stream runs in front of my house. “nagareru”
4. My nose has been running for days. “hana ga deru”
5. She runs a small translating business. “keiei suru”
6. Run the manuscript through the printer. “(kikai ni) kakeru”
7. They ran a nuclear test in the desert again. “(jikken nado wo) okonau”

The *core meaning* of *run* in these sentences has been provided in E-Gate as “to move quickly, smoothly and continuously in a certain direction.” This *core meaning*, when placed within a context, concretely describes the scene or situation. In example (1), the *core meaning* of *run* is expressed as “hashiru” in the context of a 50-meter race. In (2), the core “to move quickly, smoothly and continuously in a certain direction” is expressed as “densen suru” in the context of a stocking. In the context of a small stream in (3), the *core meaning* of *run* is “nagareru,” and when referring to a nose, *run* is expressed as “hana ga deru.”

These examples are presented in the form of

CONTEXT [CORE] → SENSE (contextual meaning)

as follows:

CORE: run: to move quickly, smoothly and continuously in a certain direction

1. Context: 50-meter race [core: run: to move quickly, smoothly and continuously in a certain direction] → “hashiru”

2. Context: stocking [core: run: to move quickly, smoothly and continuously in a certain direction] → “densen suru”

3. Context: small stream [core: run: to move quickly, smoothly and

continuously in a certain direction] → “nagareru”

4. Context: nose [core: run: to move quickly, smoothly and continuously in a certain direction] → “hana ga deru”

5. Context: woman, small translating business [core: run: to move quickly, smoothly and continuously in a certain direction] → “keiei suru”

6. Context: manuscript, printer [core: run: to move quickly, smoothly and continuously in a certain direction] → “(kikai ni) kakeru”

7. Context: certain people, nuclear test [core: run: to move quickly, smoothly and continuously in a certain direction] → “(jikken nado wo) okonau”

Examples (4), (5), and (6) are rather abstract and are not typical examples that possess all the qualities of the *core meaning* of *run*. However, they are produced by projecting the image scheme of the typical example onto the abstract domain and have at least some of the qualities of the core (Johnson, 1987; See also Kawade, 1993). Businesses or companies as referred to in (5) should move smoothly and continuously, probably in a certain direction, to gain profit. The manuscripts mentioned in (6) are put through the printer, which moves quickly, smoothly, and continuously. The tests referred to in (7) possess a continuity in procedure. We consider it effective to hypothesize a *core meaning* for each word and place it within each context to understand its sense.

In the case of verbs of perception, we would like to highlight sentences that use *look* and *see* in the manner mentioned below. Examples of sentences using *look* as a verb can be roughly divided into two groups. The first one includes examples wherein “(the subject) turns his eyes [his attention] on the object in order to see it, such as (1) or (2). The second group includes examples wherein the subject appears in a particular manner, such as (3) or (4). The examples of sentences using *look* as a noun are also divided into two corresponding groups. The first includes the act of turning the eyes (attention) on the object to see it, as described in (7) and the second refers to appearance or expression as mentioned in (8) or (9).

Verb

1. She looked at her new haircut in the mirror.
2. Look what you’ve done!
3. You look happy.
4. You made me look a complete fool! (Oxford)
5. A newborn kitten can’t see.
6. I saw a big Christmas tree at the plaza.

Noun

7. I had a look at the woman.
8. He had an anxious [a tired] look.

9. By [From] the look of the sky, it'll rain tomorrow.
10. She has good [poor] sight (eyesight).
11. Tourists are a rare sight in this area.

As mentioned above, learners encounter a difficulty in the usage of *look* when it is used to imply “(You) look at the picture” and “You look happy,” or when they have to differentiate between similar expressions such as *look* and *see*. The manner in which to present these examples to L2 learners is a subject that needs to be discussed.

Focusing: in the case of *remember*

One way to do this is to pick out certain focal points in the process. Let us look at the following examples using *remember*

12. I remember my first train ride as if it were yesterday.
13. You should remember that there are all kinds of people in this world.
14. While I was watching TV, I remembered that I should call you.
15. She remembers well.

These examples are translated into Japanese as “oboete iru (have in mind)”; “wasurezuni iru (not forget), oboete oku (keep in mind)”; “omoidasu (recall, regain)”; and “monooboe ga yoi (have a good memory),” respectively, and are confusing for Japanese learners of English. To simplify these examples, we have focused on the “input,” “retention,” and “output” stages in the process of *remembering* and proposed the *core meaning* as “to output information retained in one’s memory when necessary.” Learners can then realize that the above sentences are not as distinct in meaning as they seem to be; only the focus is different. Any information that has entered the mind is the object of the act of *remembering*. Therefore, to *remember* is to retain information and recall it whenever necessary. Input is a prerequisite and it is confirmed only by output. Example (14) emphasizes this output. Examples (12), (13), and (15) are considered from the point of view of the second focal point of retention although output is necessary for confirmation. Therefore, you cannot attach the meaning of retention alone to *remember*. If you change *remember* into something like *retain* or *store* in sentences (12), (13), and (15), you cannot obtain the same contextual senses. *Remember* is translated as “oboete iru (keep in mind)” and not “oboeru (learn, memorize).” Words like *take* (in), *acquire*, *learn* (by heart), or *memorize* cover the concept of input. Both *recall* and *recollect* cover the concept of output although they have different nuances, such as “yobi modosu (call back)” and “kaki atsumeru (gather up or collect),” respectively; therefore, they are not suitable in contexts that emphasize retention. In summary, *remember* refers to an act of output including retention and implies a prerequisite of input

(Kawade 1987). (See also Tanaka, 1987 and Dewell, 1994 on focusing.)

The Case of Verbs of Perception

In the case of verbs of perception, we would like to highlight certain focal points in the process of perception as we did for *remember*. Here, however, we would like to go a step further and highlight the *core meaning* of all the verbs in a network rather than separately.

First, let us begin with *smell*. We selected three focal points, f1, f2, and f3, which are used by the nose in the act of smelling. This implies that an instance of a continuous act is extracted, but it does not imply that those stages are autonomous or completely independent.

f1: Onset of action or putting into motion: The subject begins to activate the sense organ.

f2: Functioning: The sense organ functions and captures the object.

f3: Evaluation: The subject states the evaluation of the object.

Here, f1 is likened to the prerequisite input in *remember*; f2 is the stage wherein the sense organ is functioning, and it is likened to retention; and f3 is the stage of “evaluation,” which is likened to output in *remember*.

In the case of the word *smell*, we have the following three focal points:

8a. Smell the rose.

b. I can smell roses in the air.

c. The rose smelled good.

In (8a), a sense of smell is put in motion (“*nioi wo kagu*”); in (8b), it functions and captures an object, a scent, an odor, an aroma, a fragrance, etc. (“*nioi wo kanjiru*”); and in (8c), the subject evaluates the object (“*nioi ga suru*”). In (8c), the form of the sentence suggests that the object is emitting a smell: The rose smelled good. However, it is the subject who senses the fragrance of the rose. The focal points with regard to *smell* are as follows:

f1: Verb: The subject begins the act of detecting the smell.

Noun: the act of smelling something*

f2: Verb: The subject detects the smell with the sense organ.

Noun: the ability to sense things with the nose*

f3: Verb: The subject evaluates the smell. (Object emits the smell.)

Noun: a sense that is experienced with the nose*

Similarly, in the case of *taste*, the subject in example (9a) puts the sense organ into motion to detect the taste (f1); in (9b), the subject can or cannot capture the taste with the sense organ (f2); and (9c) is an evaluation of the object’s taste by the agent and the form assumed by the sentence suggests that the object is emitting the taste.

- 9a. The chef tasted every dish before serving it.
- b. I have a cold so I can't taste properly.
- c. This orange tastes sour.

Next, we deal with *feeling* or “the sense of touch.” For this, we usually use our hands. *Touch* and *feel* describe the point (f1) of putting the sense organ into motion (moving the hand) to detect something (10a). In f2, the sense organ functions and detects something (feels it) as described in example 10b. *Feel* is used to imply “a direct contact with a concrete object,” and it can also be applied to the emotional sense such as feeling *happy* or *sad*. The noun *feeling* implies a physical sensation and its projection onto the emotional sphere; *emotional experience* expresses this point. The word *touch* but not *feel* is used as a noun in sentence (10b). The examples provided in 10c are the agent's evaluation of the object. These sentences assume a form that suggests that the object possesses a specific quality or characteristic. Here again, only *touch* is used in sentences that require the use of a noun.

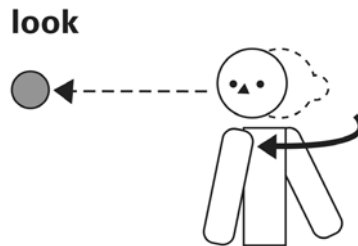
- 10a. She touched him lightly on the shoulder to wake him up.
My mother felt my forehead.
- b. I felt the spring breeze.
I could feel the ground shaking.
Blind people rely a lot on (their sense of) touch.* (noun)(Oxford)
This silk is very soft to the touch. (noun)
- c. The baby's skin felt smooth.
This material has a velvety touch. (noun)

Roses have a good smell, oranges have a sour taste, and babies have smooth skin. These qualities or characteristics are detected by our senses. They are determined only when we smell with our noses, taste with our tongues, or touch with our hands. Here, the agent and the object are inseparably merged. It helps to have learners touch the surface of the desk with their fingers and experience this feeling. The sensation experienced by the finger will soon blend into the surface of the desk, and it is difficult to tell the boundary (between the finger and the desk) (Tanaka & Kawade, 1989). Here, the shifting of points at which one's eyes are focused or a shifting of the focal point takes place. We presume this on the basis of such experiences, wherein the subject or the owner of the sense organ and the object become one, resulting in the usage of both focal points f1 and f3.

Now, let us focus on visual perception and introduce sentences with *look*, which imply the use of f1. We provide the *core meaning* of *look* as “to turn one's eyes or visual attention to see an object.” The location of the object is indicated by a preposition or an adverb.

She looked at her new haircut in the mirror.

(→ She turned her eyes or her visual attention to see her new haircut in the mirror.)



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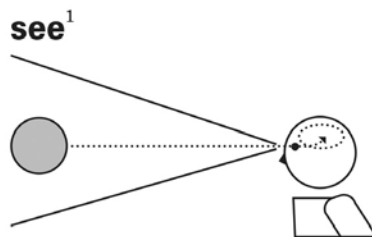
Figure 1. LOOK (reprinted from E-Gate English-Japanese dictionary, with permission)

The above sentence presents the case of an intransitive verb. However, we do not pay additional attention to the distinction between transitive and intransitive verbs. The *core meaning* of *look* itself does not change in the example below, which uses the transitive form of the verb *look* (*1).

Look what you've done! (→ Turn your eyes or visual attention to see what you've done!)

In the case of f2, *look* is not used in a manner similar to “A good sense of smell (*look)” or “His taste (*look) is very keen [sensitive].”

The word *see* expresses the meaning associated with f2. The *core meaning* of *see* is to have the visual sense organ work in order to capture the object.



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Figure 2. SEE

I saw a big Christmas tree at the plaza.

You can see the most beautiful sunset from here.

Can you see the white house over there?

A newborn kitten can't see.

It's getting dark. I can't see to read without the light now.

The ability to sense an object with the visual sense organ is called *sight* and not *look*.

We present the following sentences for f3 “~ni mieru (seem).”

3. You look happy.

4. You made me look a complete fool! (Oxford)

In (3), the subject judges that the object is happy by observing the object’s appearance or countenance. Similarly, in (4), someone put *me* in a situation in which people around evaluated *me* as a complete fool by observing *my* appearance, countenance, or action.

The following sentences are examples of nouns: (5) refers to the act of turning one’s eyes toward the object while (6) and (7) describe the appearance or evaluation of an object on the basis of its appearance.

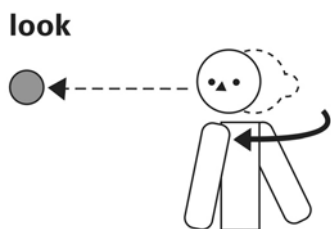
5. I had a look at the woman.

6. An anxious [a tired] look

7. By [From] the look of the sky, it’ll rain tomorrow.

In the case of the visual organ, it is extremely likely that the merging of the two actants or the shifting of attention between the owner of the sense organ and the object occurs as it does with taste or tactile organs. This, however, may not be consciously recognized by the viewer because of the distance between him and the object. A link is formed between the subject who looks and the object or the recipient of the look. This is illustrated by the expression *looker*, which is used to describe both “a person who looks” and “a person who (is beautiful and) is looked at.” *Listen* is also used to imply *seem* or *sound* although such usage is rare.

The example of the hearing organ is similar to that of the visual organ. *Listen* implies f1: to pay auditory attention or to hear something, and *hear* implies f2, which is “to capture something with the hearing organ.” (See figures 3 and 4.)



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Figure 3 LISTEN



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Figure4 HEAR

Unlike the cases of other perceptual verbs, f3 is described by the word *sound* rather than the word *listen*, probably because the object producing the

sound is regarded as being more autonomous and more independent than the objects of the other perceptual senses.

Unlike *look*, *listen* uses *to* as the preposition or the adverb in most cases. This indicates the direction in which to turn one's auditory attention.

We enjoyed listening to the Beatles.

This is because the visual organ and the auditory organ have different characteristics. While the former can pinpoint the object, the latter can only guess at the direction in which the object lies.

Another example of turning one's auditory attention (in this case, the opponent's) to a particular point is provided below:

Listen, I've got something to tell you.

As in the case of *look*, and unlike *smell* or *taste*, the word *listen*(ing) is not used for f2.

A good sense of smell (*listening)

His taste (*listening) is very keen [sensitive].

My grandmother doesn't/can't listen very well.

The word *hear* expresses the meaning associated with f2. The *core meaning* is to capture the object by auditory sense. Examples are given below:

"Tommy, can you hear me?" "Yes, I can hear you."

I heard [could hear] my father snoring in the other room.

My grandmother doesn't/can't hear very well.

The ability to capture the object with the auditory sense organ is called *hearing* and not *listening*, which is illustrated in the following sentence:

"I listened hard but didn't hear anything" implies "I turned my auditory attention to capture a sound but didn't."

Finally, on the basis of an analogy of the other four verbs of perception, the sentences used to express the meaning associated with f3 would read somewhat as follows: "This music listens terrible" or "This new recording doesn't listen as well as the old one." (Random House)

Besides verbs of perception, we have examples like "This paragraph reads well," "This pen writes well," "This keyboard plays smoothly," or "The goods sell like hotcakes." However, in the case of *listen*, the word *sound* expresses the meaning associated with f3 as follows:

He sounded very urgent on the phone.

How does this sound to you?

That sounds like a gunshot.

It sounds as if he isn't satisfied with his success.

Sound in these examples can be replaced with *seem*. The speaker's evaluation, which is drawn from the object's state, is expressed here.

Below is a summary chart of the verbs and nouns of perception.

		olfactory	taste	visual	auditory	tactile
f1: setting in motion or, getting into a state or position to activate the sense organ	verb	smell*	taste*	look	listen	touch feel*
	noun	smell	taste	look	listen	touch feel
f2: the activated sense organ	verb	smell	taste	see	hear	feel
	noun	smell	taste	(eye)sight	hearing	touch feel feeling
f3: evaluation	verb	smell	taste	look	sound	feel
	noun	smell**	taste**	look**	sound**	touch feel**

Chart 1. Focal points in the process of the verbs and nouns of perception

*Note: In f1, *feel*, rather than *touch*, bears a close parallel to *smell* or *taste* in f1. In the sentences “She smelled the meat to make sure it was still good,” “The chef tasted every dish before serving it,” and “My mother felt my forehead,” perceptual attention is set in motion in order to detect something. A probable explanation for this is that the word *touch* is frequently used because of the characteristics or explicitness and frequency of the action of touching, which can be observed externally. However, we will not discuss this point further in this paper.

**Note: The following nouns express the quality or characteristic possessed by an object: scent and odor for *smell*; flavor for *taste*; sight, scene, and view for *look*; sound for *sound*; and texture for *touch* or *feel*. In the case of *sound*, we have examples in which an object produces a sound or examples of the word *sound*, which convey a meaning that is closer to seem than to f3: The object emits/produces/generates something.

Verb: The bell sounds at noon for lunch time.

Sound a trumpet.

Noun: the sound of the clock ticking

The verbs presented in Chart 1 place emphasis on the use of f2 or f3. The concept of f2 is chiefly expressed by verbs of perception. This does not contradict the fact that many examples of f2 take the verb *can* or *cannot*, which express the ability or inability of the subject to capture the object by activating the sense organ. When f1 is expressed in a form that is different from f2, that is *look*, *listen*, and *touch*, it bears separate emphasis. *Smell* and *taste* are probably extensions of the meanings associated with f2 and are used in f1. In the case of *smell* and *taste*, the extent to which the subject and object merge is great. However, as compared with *smell* and *taste*, the subject and object are mostly seen as having a separate existence (merging occurs to a lesser extent) than in the case of *look*, *listen*, and *touch*.

Conclusion

We have discussed the material and the manner in which that material must be presented to learners of English vocabulary by focusing on verbs of perception, particularly on expressions such as “Look at the picture” and “You look happy” or the relation between the words *look* and *see*. The following steps have been proposed. These were applied in the author’s classes and elicited a favorable reaction from the students.

1. Introduce the idea of *core meaning*. Present verbs of perception within the bigger picture of a network.

2. Highlight certain focal points in the process of the activated perceptual and sense organs.

3. Take into account the shifting of focus between the subject (the owner of the perceptual and sense organs) and the object.

When the perceptual and sense organs are activated, the process is not strictly divided into completely separate steps. However, setting certain focal points facilitates learners’ understanding of the word. Henceforth, it is necessary to propose the *core meaning* of other words and organize them within the network.

Note (1): We do not attach great importance to differentiating between a transitive and intransitive verb. We focus upon the differences in terms of whether or not the verb has an object. For example, *settle* implies “(of someone/something that is moving about) to come to stay in one place for some time.” Examples of transitive and intransitive forms of the verb *settle* that have a common *core meaning* are provided below:

11a. The dog settled comfortably in front of the fireplace.

11b. The dog settled itself in front of the fireplace.

11c. He settled the child in his lap.

Note (2) I'd like to express my gratitude to Prof. David Carlson at Matsumoto Dental University for his valuable comments.

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Appendix

		SMELL
f1	verb	Smell the rose.* She smelled the meat to make sure it was still good. He picked up the fish and smelled it. The cat was smelling the visitor's shoes out of curiosity.
	noun	Have a smell of this egg and tell me if it's bad.(Oxford)
f2	verb	I can smell roses in the air. I smelled the curry in the hallway. Don't you smell gas? I smell a rat. I cannot smell because I have a cold.
	noun	a good sense of smell Smell is one of the five senses.(Cambridge)
f3	verb	The rose smelled good. Babies smell of milk. The baby's diapers began to smell.
	noun	These flowers have a nice [bad] smell.

		TASTE
f1	verb	The chef tasted every dish before serving it.
	noun	Please have a taste of this soup.
f2	verb	I can taste ginger in this cookie. I have a cold, so I can't taste properly.
	noun	His taste is very keen [sensitive].
f3	verb	This tea tastes of soap. This orange tastes sour.
	noun	This wine has a sweet taste.

		TOUCH/FEEL
f1	verb	She touched him lightly on the shoulder to wake him up. Touch your ears. Do not touch. My mother felt my forehead.
	noun	That pile of books looks as though it will collapse at the slightest touch.(Oxford) Could I have a feel of that Persian carpet?
f2	verb	She felt in her bag for her lipstick. I tried to feel the wall of the cave. He (could feel) felt someone's shoulder against his back. I (can) feel something move [moving] in my sock. I (could feel) felt her presence in the next room. He cannot feel now. He's dead. He felt very sad when his dog died.
	noun	Blind people rely a lot on (their sense of) touch (Oxford) This fabric is very soft to the touch. The material is very hard to the feel. I lost feeling in my right hand.
f3	verb	The baby's skin felt smooth. feel like/feel as if
	noun	The warm touch of her mother's hand had a soothing effect on the child. This cloth has a velvety touch. She likes the feel of her new coat.

		LOOK/SEE
f1	verb	Just look at that rainbow! She looked at her new haircut in the mirror. Look, here comes the parade. Look what you've done!
	noun	I had a look at the woman.
f2	verb	I saw a big Christmas tree at the plaza. You can see the most beautiful sunset from here. Can you see the white house over there? A newborn kitten can't see. It's getting dark. I can't see to read without the light now.
	noun	have good [poor] sight (eyesight) Get out of my sight.
f3	verb	You look happy. You made me look a complete fool.
	noun	an anxious [a tired] look By [From] the look of the sky, it'll rain tomorrow. Tourists are a rare sight in this area. The mere sight of blood made me sick.

		LISTEN/HEAR/SOUND
f1	verb	I listened hard but didn't hear anything. We enjoyed listening to the Beatles. Listen, I got something to tell you.
	noun	Hey, just have a listen to this CD.
f2	verb	"Tommy, can you hear me?" "Yes, I can hear you." I heard [could hear] my father snoring in the other room. My grandmother doesn't/can't hear very well.
	noun	His hearing is poor. He is hard of hearing.
f3	verb	He sounded very urgent on the phone. How does this sound to you? That sounds like a gunshot. It sounds as if he isn't satisfied with his success.
	noun	by [from] the sound of it [things] Her voice had a suspicious sound.