

IN: *FESTSCHRIFT TO GUNNAR JAKOBSSON*. SLAVIC DEPT., UNIVERSITY OF GÖTEBORG, SWEDEN

# ON THE SEMANTIC FIELDS OF CONFLICT AND CONFLICT RESOLUTION IN SWEDISH

*- Universal and culture specific (Swedish) aspects*

Jens Allwood  
Dept of Linguistics, Göteborg University

## 1. Purpose

Conflict and conflict handling are central and pervasive features of human interaction. To gain greater insight into the nature of conflict and conflict handling is arguably therefore important. In this paper, I want to make a contribution to such insight by examining the semantic and conceptual information associated with the vocabulary of conflict and conflict handling in Swedish.

A second purpose of the paper is to discuss some structural features of semantic fields which I believe also can be found in other semantic fields than conflict and conflict handling.

## 2. Background

There are several perspectives which have motivated the work. One of the most important is that of "linguistic relativity". This paper definitely falls in the tradition started by Herder (1772), continued by Humboldt (1836), Boas (1911), Sapir (1921), Whorf (1956), Weissgerber (1953), Kainz (1946), and Leise (1975), to mention only a few of the historically important contributors to the investigation of the influence of language on thought. The version of "linguistic relativity" in this paper can be formulated as follows:

Human languages are not only a means of communication, they are also collective memories. Through a language, a small child quickly gets access to many of the concepts, attitudes and values through which the community he/she is going to be socialized into structures its social and natural environment. Human languages, together with (other) artefacts, provide necessary external supports for the (shared) concepts, attitudes and values which provide an important part of the basis for

coordinated social action and interaction. Our language and artefacts guide us by providing more or less worked out options for action and interaction. They have both a facilitating function, by providing options, and a constraining function, by not providing other options.

If we, for the moment, disregard artefacts, we can say that language, by providing mainly symbolic (and to some extent iconic and indexical) codification of concepts, attitudes and values, provides support for the maintenance of these concepts, attitudes and values as viable alternatives for thinking and action in a given community. Let us now, in some more detail, consider how this is done.

First a few words about concepts. Since the nature of "concepts" is one of the most debated issues in the philosophy both of the West and the East, let it be sufficient to say that the view taken here is a "conceptualist view", where concepts are seen as cognitive units resulting from processes of perception, understanding, volition and emotion involving trying to proactively and reactively structure the world. To be maintained, by an individual or by a society, these cognitive units require support. This support can be provided by perceptual indices and icons, and by acoustic/auditive and optic/visual symbols, as well as by other artefacts.

Let us now briefly consider the kinds of linguistic expressions which are relevant for the study of conflict and conflict handling. For the concepts at hand the primary categories seem to be nouns and verbs with some adjectives and adverbs. For attitudes and values related to conflict and conflict handling, categories of expression like idioms, metaphors and proverbs probably would be more revealing.

As an antidote to linguistic relativity, a second important perspective and goal motivating this paper is the search for linguistically supported conceptual or semantic universals. This work has traditionally been carried out by philosophically minded linguists, cf. Wilkins (1668) or linguistically minded philosophers like Aristotle (1938) or Kant (1975). In our century it has become a main stream current in linguistics, especially in the period following 1970. One of the first and most successful works in this tradition was Berlin and Kay (1969), which tried to establish the existence of perceptually given universal foci of color. This work was followed by many others, cf., for example, Miller and Johnson-Laird (1976), Viberg (1983), and Wierzbicka (1992). During the 1980:s the school of cognitive linguistics has had the search for semantic universals as one of its main goals, cf. Talmy (1981), Langacker (1987), and Lakoff (1987).

One of the goals of the paper is therefore indeed to find candidates for semantic and conceptual universals. However, such candidates based merely on the investigation of one language can only be regarded as first proposals. For deeper insights more data from several languages is necessary. For an attempt in this direction see Allwood and Asmah (forthcoming).

A third perspective is an interest in different types of semantic structuring. We will here be examining semantic fields. The concept "semantic fields" was introduced into linguistics by Trier (1931) in order to study the historical change of concepts and meaning. After its introduction it very quickly gained popularity and has become one

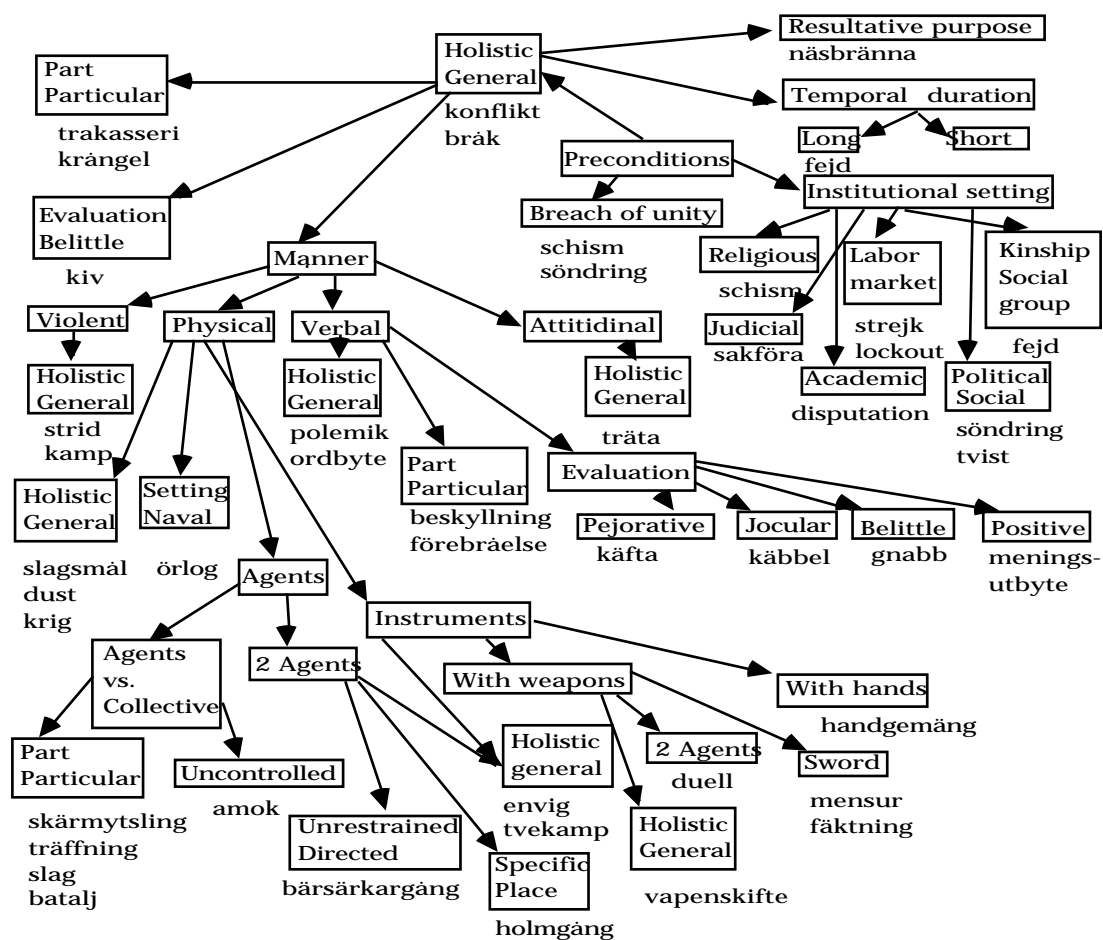
of the main descriptive concepts of semantics. See, for example, Lyons (1977), Lehrer (1974). The advantage of a semantic field is that it gives you an overview of a conceptual area and allows you to see how different linguistically coded concepts in a language, by contrast, determine each other. Usually the inspection of a semantic field will lead to the discovery that the field has an internal structure with subfields which have one or more features in common. These features can mostly be extracted and be made to form the basis of a feature analysis of the words in the field. Semantic fields are usually organized around "meaning types". The types derive from particular instances of contextually determined meaning by a process of abstraction or generalization which is perhaps primarily carried out by a linguistic analyst but which can also be carried out by ordinary language users themselves. In other words, the analysis is carried out on a relatively abstract generalized level where concrete contexts only provide a point of departure. The loss of information involved in this approach can to some extent be remedied by studying meaning in a more context sensitive way, for example in the form of "meaning potentials", cf Rommetveit (1974) and Allwood (1989).

This paper presents a first look at the linguistically codified concepts and ways of thinking about conflict and conflict resolution which are focused on in Swedish. Besides conflict resolution in a narrow sense I will also, in a broader sense, be concerned with ways of terminating (by, for example, vanquishing the other party) and avoiding conflict. For this broad sense of "conflict handling" I will sometimes use the term "non-conflict". "Conflict handling" in a narrow sense can be called "conflict resolution" and be regarded as the normatively ideal way of getting rid of conflict once it has been started.

### **3. Conflict**

#### **3.1 Conflict - an overview of semantic dimensions.**

In order to facilitate an understanding of the analysis of the Swedish vocabulary of conflict, I first give an overview of the semantic dimensions I have found helpful in order to structure the field. The dimensions are exemplified by Swedish words which can be found with their translations in the more complete field given below. The main semantic dimensions which seem to be relevant in differentiating Swedish conflict related words are as can be seen in figure 1.



**Figure 1.** Semantic Dimensions of Conflict Related Vocabulary

In order to facilitate comparison between Swedish and other languages, I will summarize, below, the semantic dimensions which seem to be relevant in differentiating Swedish conflict related words.

1. **General - particular:** Some terms denote conflict in a fairly abstract general way like the word conflict itself. Other terms denote a particular type or instance of conflict like the word duel. All words which are not listed directly under 1. "Holistic, general" are regarded as more particular than the words listed there.
2. **Part-whole:** This feature concerns whether what is denoted is the conflict as a whole, or various distinguishable parts or phases of the conflict. Consider, for example, the difference between "a war" and "a battle". Frequently, the holistic and the general are combined. For example, the word conflict is both general and holistic. Analogously, the same holds for the "part of" relation and the "instantiation" relation. For example, "harassment" could both be seen as a part of a conflict and as an instantiation of a particular type of conflict. In the diagram, general and holistic are kept together; this has the consequence that all terms under the heading "holistic general" or in some cases just "holistic" are superordinate to what in the diagram looks like coordinate categories. Thus envig (2.2.3.2.1 below) is superordinate to duel 2.2.3.2.2 since the latter but not the former seems to require weapons. In general, the index 1 will indicate that words classified this way have a higher type (cf. section 3.1.2).

3. **Evaluation:** Quite a few terms facilitate indicating various attitudes to a conflict or its parts (eg negative, positive, jocular, belittling attitudes). Compare, eg *käfte* (wrangle) and *gruff* (row), where the first one in Swedish is pejorative and the second one is jocular.
4. **Manner:** Terms are also differentiated as to what manner of conflict they presuppose. The following five manners or modes of conflict seem to be highlighted by the Swedish vocabulary items examined,
  - (i) **violent**, eg *strid* (fight), *kamp* (struggle); we know the conflict is violent but not whether it is physical, verbal or attitudinal
  - (ii) **physical**, eg *slagsmål* (physical fight), *krig* (war); even though "violent" does not always imply "physical", "physical" always seems to imply "violent"
  - (iii) **verbal**, eg *polemik* (polemics), *debatt* (debate)
  - (iv) **attitudinal**, eg *missämja* (dissension) *oenighet* (disagreement)
  - (v) **control, restrain, directedness of agents:** Two terms *amok* (amuck) and *bärsärkargång* (go berzerk) presuppose violent action which is uncontrolled (amuck) or directed but unrestrained (go berzerk). This dimension seems only to apply as a specification of physical manner.
5. **Preconditions:** A few terms presuppose specific preconditions to be applied. Terms like *schism* (schism) and *söndring* (disunity) presuppose a state of ideological unity. Other terms like *disputation* (doctoral disputation) presuppose a special institutional setting.
6. **Number of agents:** Some terms presuppose 2 agents eg *tvekamp* (duel)
7. **Instruments:** Some terms presuppose specific instruments; eg weapons, swords, hands eg *fäkta* (fence), *boxa* (box).
8. **Temporal duration:** Some terms presuppose a specific temporal duration, eg *fejd* (feud)
9. **Spatial location:** One term - *holmgång* presupposes besides violent physical armed conflict between two persons that it is carried out on an island. At least, this applies to its most prominent non-metaphorical use.
10. **Orientation towards results:** One term presupposes orientation towards painful result *näsbränna* (rebuke) (lit. nose burn). This term is quite general and does not presuppose conflict. It is used to signify a painful result of unhappy action (roughly being taught a lesson).
11. **Institutional setting:** Several terms presuppose a particular institutional setting as a background for the conflict, eg *sakföra* (take to court) or *disputation* (academic disputation). In fact, for most of these terms, it would also be true to say they denote a form of conflict which is itself institutionalized with very specific conventions. To a certain extent an institutional setting is presupposed by all terms but for the terms under 10 this feature is more prominent.

The semantic dimensions that are highlighted in the various conflictual terms can be read as an embryonic semantic feature analysis as exemplified below:

<b>Duel</b>	<b>Disputation</b>	<b>Disagreement</b>
2 agents	Academic	Attitudinal
Armed	Institutional context	Conflict
Violent	Verbal	
Physical	Conflict	
Conflict		

The features do not, in general, as they stand provide definitions of the terms. Rather, they give salient features which sometimes amount to necessary conditions for the application of the various terms. In order to create strict "essential" definitions (traditionally constituted by necessary and sufficient conditions), one needs to make sure that the features really jointly make up necessary and sufficient conditions for the application of the term one is interested in.

### **3.2 A semantic field for conflict related terms in Swedish**

Using the semantic dimensions described above, I will now present a more complete account of the Swedish vocabulary of conflict. The words are, as above, classified according to prominent semantic features in their meaning. The classification is not necessarily always mutually exclusive, since words often have meanings that are complex enough to warrant classification in several categories. This complexity is reinforced by the fact that "metaphorical usages" are not easy to distinguish from "non-metaphorical usages". Does the word *kamp* (struggle) imply violence or does it not? Is it metaphorical when it does not seem to necessarily imply violence like in an example of the type *Darwin's struggle for scientific recognition*.. Since a distinction between metaphorical and nonmetaphorical usage is, in fact, both theoretically problematic and not of central concern in this paper, I have thought it sufficient to be guided by linguistic intuition regarding what is metaphorical and have classified words according to what has seemed to me their most prominent (usually nonmetaphorical) features. In some cases, this has meant that lexemes have been classified in several ways. The lexemes are sometimes given as nouns, eg *strid* (fight, noun) and sometimes as verbs, eg *strida* (fight, verb) depending on what has seemed the most convenient form in context.

As in the diagram, words which have been classified as general are superordinate to other words, even if they, strictly speaking, graphically and numerically look like coordinates.

## *The semantic field for conflict related terms in Swedish*

1.	<b>Holistic general</b>
1.1	<b>Holistic general conflict:</b> <i>konflikt</i> (conflict), <i>gurgel</i> (row, squabble), <i>krakel</i> (squabble, brawl), <i>ofred</i> (discord), <i>osämja</i> (disagreement), <i>tvedräkt</i> (disagreement), <i>slitning</i> (wear, friction), <i>split</i> (discord), <i>bråk</i> (trouble), <i>kamp</i> (struggle), <i>krångel</i> (complication, trouble)
1.2	<b>Part of and/or particular conflict oriented action:</b> <i>slag</i> (battle). The word in 1.2 is related to the words in 1.1 both through the subtype and the part of relation. A battle is, thus, as stated above both a type of conflict and a possible part of a conflict.
1.3	<b>Evaluation (usually belittling) of conflict activity:</b> <i>kiv</i> (strife), <i>krångel</i> (bother).
2.	<b>Manner</b>
2.1	<b>Holistic general violent:</b> <i>strid</i> (fight), <i>kamp</i> (struggle), <i>fejd</i> (feud). <i>Strid</i> , <i>kamp</i> and <i>fejd</i> have not been classified under 2.2. (the numerical index for physical conflict) since they do not seem to necessarily involve physical conflict, eg <i>En strid om ord</i> (a fight about words). Conceptually, at least in Swedish, conflicts can be violent, even if not physical. Conversely, however, an implication seems to hold that all physical conflicts are violent.
2.2.1.1	<b>Holistic general physical conflict:</b> <i>dust</i> (fight), <i>slagsmål</i> (fight), <i>stridighet</i> (fight), <i>tummel</i> (tussle), <i>krig</i> (war), <i>slaktning</i> (slaughter), <i>bardalek</i> (combat), <i>ofred</i> (discord)
2.2.1.2	<b>Part of and/or particular physical conflict:</b> <i>drabbning</i> (minor battle), <i>fältslag</i> (battle), <i>slag</i> (battle), <i>batalj</i> (battle), <i>skärmytsling</i> (skirmish), <i>träffning</i> (minor battle)
2.2.2	<b>Naval physical conflict:</b> <i>örlog</i> (naval war)
2.2.3.1.1	<b>Uncontrolled physical conflict of agent against collective:</b> <i>amok</i> (amuck). In section 2.2.3., the number of agents involved in physical conflict is focused.
2.2.3.1.2	<b>Unrestrained directed physical conflict of agent against collective:</b> <i>bärsärkargång</i> (go berzerk). "Going berzerk" would, thus, according to this classification be unrestrained but directed against specific other persons while "amuck" would involve more generally uncontrolled violent behavior.

As has been pointed out above, many of the concepts can be linguistically expressed, both as verbs and as nouns. However, the following seem to occur only as nouns *tillmäle*, *reprimand*, *skrapa* and the following only as verbs, *käftea*, *käxa*.

2.2.3.2.1	<b>Holistic general physical conflict with two agents:</b> <i>envig</i> (single combat), <i>tvekamp</i> (duel)
2.2.3.2.2 or 2.2.4.1.2.1	<b>Physical conflict w. two agents and weapons:</b> <i>duell</i> (duel). If <i>duell</i> is classified as the first way, it is seen as primarily a type of "2 agent combat", if it is classified in the latter way, it is primarily seen as a type of "armed combat".
2.2.4.1.1	<b>Holistic general physical conflict with weapons:</b> <i>vapenskitte</i> (exchange of weapons, armed combat), <i>handgemäng</i> (come to close quarters), In section 2.2.4, the use of instruments in physical conflict is focused.
2.2.4.1.2.2	<b>Physical conflict w. agents and weapons in specific place (island):</b> <i>holmgång</i> (duel on island)
2.2.4.1.3	<b>Physical conflict w. swords:</b> <i>mensur</i> (sword fight), <i>fäktning</i> (fencing). This category is, thus, different from 2.2.4.1.1 and 2.2.4.1.2 in that the choice of weapon is specifically presupposed to be a sword.
2.2.4.2	<b>Physical conflict w. hand:</b> <i>handgemäng</i> (hand-to-hand fighting) <i>armbrytning</i> (arm wrestling), <i>boxning</i> (boxing).
2.3.1.1	<b>Holistic general verbal conflict:</b> <i>polemik</i> (polemics), <i>schism</i> (schism), <i>disputation</i> (disputation), <i>meningsbyte</i> (exchange of opinions), <i>ordbyte</i> (verbal exchange), <i>ordväxling</i> (verbal exchange), <i>debatt</i> (debate), <i>dispyt</i> (dispute), <i>palaver</i> (palaver), <i>diskussion</i> (discussion), <i>gnabb</i> (bicker), <i>gräl</i> (quarrel), <i>käbbel</i> (squabbling), <i>kontrovers</i> (controversy), <i>munhuggas</i> (mouth cut = argue), <i>näbbas</i> (beak = disagree verbally)
2.3.1.2	<b>Part of and/or particular verbal conflict oriented activity (action):</b> <i>gorm</i> (brawl), <i>käfta</i> (wrangle), <i>gurgla</i> (squabble), <i>käxa</i> (nag), <i>vara uppstudsig</i> (be insolent).
2.3.2.1	<b>Evaluation of conflict oriented verbal activity (prejorative):</b> <i>käbbel</i> (squabble), <i>käfta</i> (wrangle), <i>gurgla</i> (squabble), <i>käxa</i> (nag)
2.3.2.2	<b>Evaluation of conflict oriented verbal activity (jocular):</b> <i>gruff</i> (row), <i>gorm</i> (brawl)
2.3.2.3	<b>Evaluation of conflict oriented verbal activity (belittle):</b> <i>gnabb</i> (bicker)
2.3.2.4	<b>Evaluation of conflict oriented verbal activity (positive):</b> <i>meningsutbyte</i> (exchange of views)
2.4	<b>Holistic general attitudinal conflict:</b> <i>Missämja</i> (dissension), <i>osämja</i> (disagreement), <i>tvedräkt</i> (disagreement), <i>misshällighet</i> (disagreement), <i>oenighet</i> (disagreement)
3.1	<b>Conflict in political, social setting:</b> <i>söndring</i> (division), <i>tvist</i> (dispute)
3.2	<b>Conflict in religious setting:</b> <i>schism</i> (schism)
3.3	<b>Conflict in academic setting:</b> <i>disputation</i> (disputation), <i>mensur</i> (student sword fighting)
3.4	<b>Conflict in labor market:</b> <i>strejk</i> (strike), <i>lockout</i> (lockout)
3.5	<b>Conflict in judicial setting:</b> <i>sakföra</i> (take to court), <i>komma i klammeri med rättvisan</i> (fall foul of the law)
3.6	<b>Conflict in a setting of kinship or very cohesive social group:</b> <i>fejd</i> (feud), <i>blodshämnd</i> (blood revenge)



4.	<b><i>Conflict of long temporal duration: fejd</i></b> (feud)
5.	<b><i>Activity oriented to painful result: näsbränna</i></b> (rebuke), <i>bekyllning</i> (accusation), <i>tillmäle</i> (insult), <i>förolämpa</i> (insult), <i>förberåelse</i> (blame), <i>reprimand</i> (reprimand), <i>tillrättavisning</i> (reprimand), <i>tillvitelse</i> (charge, imputation), <i>bannor</i> (scolding), <i>skrapa</i> (scolding), <i>snäsor</i> (snapping, rebuffing, snubbing), <i>snubbor</i> (snubbing)

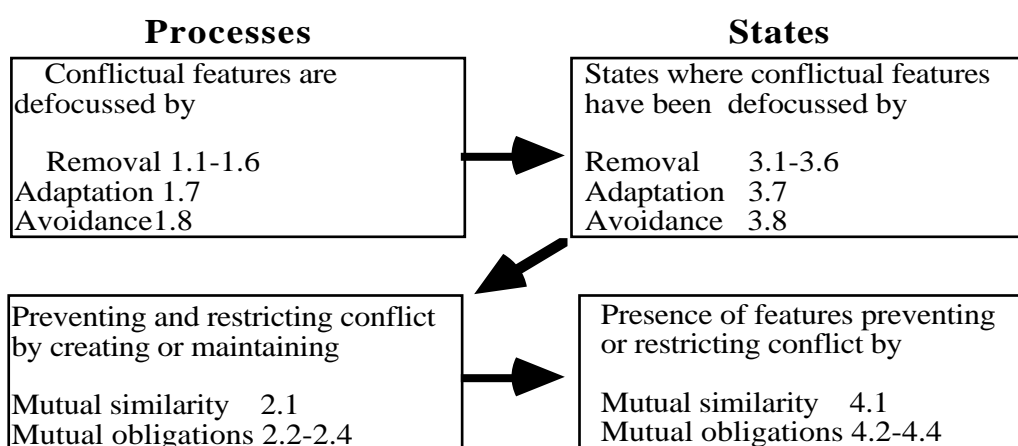
As has already been noted the categories of the semantic field are not always mutually exclusive. This is so, since for some terms several semantic dimensions can be highlighted. For example, *fejd* (feud) is a word which both in Swedish and English denotes a conflict, which on the one hand, has long duration and, on the other hand, often involves cohesive social groups like kinship groups. Similarly, the word *duell* (duel) which denotes armed combat between two agents, highlights both the instrumental (weapons) and agent (2 agents) dimension. This word has, therefore, been cross-classified under weapons and agent.

There are also various implicational relations between the terms. Terms of the categories 2, 3, 4, 5 and 6 all imply terms of categories 1.1 and sometimes 1.2. Further, terms of all categories are to some extent compatible since they often focus on properties which although they are different can simultaneously and, thus, compatibly occur in the same activity. For example, a schism can involve rebuke, be an aspect of a feud, involve disagreement, polemics, bickering, accusations and could, finally, perhaps in virtue of this be characterized as a fight. The mutual compatibility of the terms is strengthened by the fact, that there is no very clear way of distinguishing metaphorical from non-metaphorical usage of the terms. A debate can be called a squabble or a fight without doing much injustice to our intuitions. Hierarchical diagrams, of the type exhibited in diagram 1, are, thus, slightly misleading in leading us to believe that we are dealing with mutually exclusive categories. In fact, facts of cross classification and mutual compatibility indicate that property matrices would be a more correct, even if a less perspicuous form of representation.

From a more substantial point of view, the field indicates that "manner" and "institutional setting" have been the two culturally most important dimensions behind Swedish conflict terms. The manners of conflict which are linguistically codified are mainly "physical" (violent) and "verbal", where the physical conflicts are subclassified for number of agents and type of utilized instruments and the verbal conflicts often concern status and are often negatively evaluated.

#### **4. Conflict handling and non-conflict**

Conflict handling and non-conflict, in this paper, covers not only processes and states related to absence, avoidance and cessation of conflict but also processes and states related to preventing and constraining the possibility of conflict. As above, the words have been categorized according to prominent semantic dimensions in their meaning. Figure 2 below gives an overview.



**Figure 2.** Semantic dimensions related to non-conflict, i.e., absence, avoidance, cessation, restriction and prevention of conflict

Figure 2 indicates that the relevant words can be classified in four main categories. Two of the categories contain terms referring to processes and two of the categories contain terms referring to states which result from these processes. We also see that there is a major distinction between processes and states having to do with removal, adaption and avoidance of conflictual features, and processes and states which prevent conflictual features from ever arising.

***The semantic field of non-conflict in Swedish***

<i>Process</i>	<i>Resulting state</i>
1. <b><i>Removing disturbing features</i></b>	3. <b><i>Absence of disturbing features</i></b>
1.1.1 <b><i>Removing disturbance</i></b>  Lugna (calm down)  Harmonisera (harmonize)	3.1.1 <b><i>General absence of disturbance</i></b> Frid (peace) Lugn (calm) Ro (tranquility) Trankilitet (tranquility) Harmoni (harmony)
1.1.2 <b><i>Removing dynamic (accoustic) disturbance</i></b> Stilla (to silence)	3.1.2 <b><i>Absence of accoustic disturbance</i></b>  Stillhet (silence)
1.2 <b><i>Removing interpersonal conflicts</i></b>  Freda sig (protect oneself)  Förlika (reconcile) Harmonisera (harmonize) Rekonciliera (reconciliate) Bilägga (settle)	3.2 <b><i>Holistic general absence of interpersonal conflict</i></b> Vara i fred (leave alone, leave in peace) Fred (peace) Pax (pax) Förlikning (reconciliation) Harmoni (harmony) Rekonciliering (reconciliation)
1.3.1 <b><i>Removing negatively disturbing attitudes to other person</i></b>	3.3.1 <b><i>Absence of negatively disturbing attitudes</i></b>

	Bli kontant med någon (Come on good terms with someone) Bli på talfot med någon (Come on speaking terms with someone)		Vara kontant med någon (Be on good terms with someone) Vara på talfot med någon (Be on speaking terms with someone)
1.3.2	<b>Removing social formality restrictions</b> Dua (to say <i>thou</i> (informal personal pronoun))	3.3.2	<b>State of informality</b> <b>Absence of social formal limitation</b> Duskap (thouship)
1.3.3	<b>Removing responsibility for, or acceptable grounds for seemingly negative or questionable activity</b>  Urskulda (excuse) Rättfärdiga, berättiga (justify)	3.3.3	<b>Absence of responsibility for, or giving the presence of acceptable grounds for seemingly negative or questionable behavior</b>  Vara urskuldad (be excused) Vara rättfärdigad, berättigad (be justified)
1.3.4	<b>Removal of negative attitude and obligation of negatively ompensating behavior (retaliation)</b> Förlåta (pardon) Ursäkta (excuse) Tillge (forgive) Försona (resolve)	3.3.4	<b>Absence of negative attitudes and absolution of obligation to compensate</b> Förlåtelse (pardon) Vara ursäktad (be excused) Vara tillgiven (be forgiven) Försoning (reconciliation, atonement)
1.4	<b>Removal of punishment</b> Benåda (pardon) Ge amnesti (grant amnesty)	3.4	<b>Absolution of punishment</b> Benådning (pardon) Amnesti (amnesty)
1.5	<b>Removing of conflictual features</b> Förtryck (oppress) Undertrycka (suppress) Tvinga (force)	3.5	<b>Suppressed conflict</b> Förtryck (oppression)  Tvång (force)
1.6	<b>Removing conflictual features by elimination</b> Likvidera (liquidate) Eliminera (eliminate)	3.6	<b>Eliminated conflict</b>  Likvidering (liquidation) Eliminering (elimination)

Under 1.6, we can, in fact, find all conflict terms which denote activities that could result in forcing an adversary to cease conflictual action.

1.7.1	<b>Removing conflictual features by accepting them</b> Acceptera (accept) Anpassa sig (adjust to) Assimilera (assimilate)	3.7.1	<b>State of non-antagonistic acceptance of conflictual features</b> Acceptans (acceptance) Anpassning (adjustment) Assimilering (assimilation)
1.7.2	<b>Removing conflictual features by information</b> Hjärntvätt (brain wash) Utbildning (education) Propaganda (propaganda)	3.7.2	<b>Changed state of cognition</b>  Vara hjärntvättad (be brain washed) Vara utbildad (be educated)

Påverkan (influence)	Vara påverkad (be influenced)
1.7.3 <b><i>Removing conflictual features by containment</i></b> Lugna ner (calm down) Sansa sig (come to one's senses) Pacificera (pacify) Hämma (inhibit)	3.7.3 <b><i>State of contained conflictual features</i></b> Vara lugn (calm) Vara sansad (sensible) Vara pacificerad (be pacified) Vara hämmad (be inhibited)
1.8 <b><i>Removing conflictual features by avoidance</i></b> Undvika konflikt (avoid conflict)  Använda diplomati (use diplomacy) Vara hänsynsfull (be considerate) Bortse från (neglect)	3.8 <b><i>Avoidance of conflict</i></b>  Konflikt undvikande (conflict avoidance) Samexistens (co-existence) Diplomati (diplomacy) Hänsyn (consideration)

For most of the verbs which denote removal of disturbing features, the locus for these features can be:

- (i) (the agent who is doing the removal (the protagonist) - usually expressed by a reflexive; *lugna sig* (calm oneself), *förlåta sig* (själv) (excuse one self)
- (ii) another agent - sometimes an antagonist - usually in the patient role, expressed as an indirect object; *lugna någon* (calm someone), *förlåta någon* (excuse someone)
- (iii) Some (external) state of affairs - usually expressed by a direct object in the form of a *that* clause; *förlåta att du gick* (excuse that you left).

All verbs do not combine with all three kinds of focussed locus. The verb *lugna* (calm) cannot take a *that*-clause. Most verbs also require a choice between an indirect and a direct object (*that*-clause) construction. Both Swedish and English allow *rättfärdiga att* (justify that) and at least Swedish *rättfärdiga någon* (justify someone) and neither Swedish nor English *rättfärdiga någon att* (justify someone that). However, for the verb *förlåta*, Swedish, but not English, does allow this type of construction; *förlåta någon att* (excuse someone that).

2. <b><i>Creating conflict preventing features</i></b>	4. <b><i>Presence of conflict preventing features</i></b>
2.1 <b><i>Creating interindividual similarity in attitude</i></b>  Bli ense, eniga (to agree) Bli sams (become friends) Bli överens (come to an agreement)	4.1 <b><i>Interindividual similarity in attitude</i></b>  Endräkt (concord) Enighet (unity) Konsensus (consensus) Endräktighet (concord) Samdräktighet (concord)  Vara ense, eniga (be agreed) Vara sams (be friends) Vara överens (be agreed) Enhällighet (unanimity)

		Samklang (accord, harmony) Enstämmighet (unanimity)
2.2.1	<b><i>Creating mutual obligations</i></b> Överenskomma (agree) Avtala (agree) Vidtala (arrange with) Stipulera (stipulate) Bestämma (decide) Besluta (decide) Göra upp (settle)	4.2.1 <b><i>Mutual obligations</i></b> Överenskommelse (agreement) Avtal (agreement, contract)  Stipulation (stipulation) Bestämmelse (regulation) Beslut (decision) Uppgörelse (settlement)
2.2.2	<b><i>Creating mutual obligations and mutual positive attitudes</i></b> Förbrödras (fraternize)	4.2.2 <b><i>Mutual obligations and positive attitudes</i></b> Broderskap (brotherhood) Brödraskap (fraternity)
2.2.3	<b><i>Creating joint purpose and joint mutual consideration</i></b> Samarbete (cooperate) Integrera (integrate)	4.2.3 <b><i>State of joint purpose and activity under mutual consideration</i></b> samarbete (cooperation) integration (integration)
2.3.1	<b><i>Creating equitably (mutually) adjusted demands</i></b> Kompromissa (compromise) Jämka(modify, adjust) Gå en medelväg (take a middle course)	4.3.1 <b><i>Equitably (mutually) adjusted demands</i></b> Kompromiss (compromise) Jämkning (adjustment, compromise) Medelväg (middle course)
2.3.2	<b><i>Negative evaluation of the means for creating mutually adjusted demands</i></b> Kohandla (cow commerce)	4.3.2 <b><i>Negative evaluation of mutually adjusted demands</i></b> Kohandel (cow commerce)
2.3.3	<b><i>Creation of mutually adjusted commercial demands</i></b> Ackordera (comound) Köpslå (bargain) Pruta (bargain)	4.3.3 <b><i>Mutually adjusted commercial demands</i></b> Ackord (composition)
2.4.1	<b><i>Creating mutual adjustments via 3:rd party</i></b> Medla (mediate) Förlika (reconcile)	
2.4.2	<b><i>Creating judicial obligations via 3:rd party</i></b> Döma (judge, sentence)	4.4.2 <b><i>Judicial obligations decided by 3:d party</i></b> dom (sentence)

As we can see the terms that refer to processes and states related to non-conflict have been organized into the following four main categories, where activities of type 1 correspond to states of type 3 and activities of type 2 corresponds to type 4.

1. Activities that remove disturbing features, causes or properties of conflict
2. Activities that create features which prevent conflict, ie the positive counterparts of conflict, eg cooperation, consensus etc.

3. States that are characterized by the absence of disturbing features or result through the removal of the causes of, or properties of such features.
4. States that are characterized by the positive properties resulting from the activities which create features preventing conflict.

In very general terms the Swedish vocabulary of non-conflict, thus, points to processes, on the one hand, and states, on the other hand. The processes either remove (negative) traits which are conducive to conflict or create (positive) traits which are preventive of conflict. The states correspond to the processes and are presented either as characterized by the absence of traits which are conducive to conflict or by the presence of (positive) traits which are preventive of conflict. More specifically:

1. What ideally should be *removed or absent* are the following traits:
  - (i) Disturbing sensory input and discordant movement
  - (ii) Incompatibility of interests
  - (iii) Negative mutual attitudes
  - (iv) Rank and status based restrictions on interaction
  - (v) Negative obligations (eg the obligation to take revenge) and punishment
2. What should be *created and present* in order to prevent conflict is:
  - (i) Interindividual similarity in attitude
  - (ii) Mutually positive attitudes combined with mutual (informal) obligation
  - (iii) Mutually adjusted demands (possibly via 3:rd party)
  - (iv) Mutual formal obligation (possibly via 3:rd party)

As was the case with the conflict denoting terms, the non-conflict terms often focus on one or several traits taken from a much larger set of mutually compatible traits which are characteristic of the processes and states which are related to non-conflict. This means that one can simultaneously negotiate, compromise, fraternize, forgive and agree and that the state or states resulting from these activities can simultaneously be characterized by tranquility, unity, agreement, consensus etc.

There are logical relations also between these terms. For example, state denoting terms sometimes imply the related process terms, eg *förlåtelse* (a pardon) implies that someone has engaged in the action of *förlåta* (to pardon) or *avtal* (agreement) implies that someone has *avtalat* (agreed). A difficulty here is that some states can perhaps come about without there having occurred any specific process creating that state; so that in English for some kinds of "agreement" (and also for Swedish *vara överens* but not for Swedish *avtal* (both Swedish terms mean agreement)), people could be said to be in agreement without ever having explicitly agreed.

When it comes to analysis of logical entailments it is perhaps also worthwhile pointing out that concepts related to lack of conflict like "peace" easily invite a treatment where they are treated as ideal types rather than as "descriptive essences". So while "peace" as a "descriptive essence", unfortunately, does not strictly imply such things as consensus, unity, brotherhood and agreement, one might want to say that ideally it should. One solution would then be to say that the ideal type for peace "ideal

peace" does imply consensus, unity, brotherhood and agreement but that the "descriptive essence" of peace does not. Both ideal types and essences (an essence can be described as the greatest common semantic denominator in terms of necessary and sufficient conditions) can, of course, be related to language and culture so that it might turn out that there are differences both with regard to "essence" and "ideal type" dependent on language and/or culture of departure. Swedish related views on "essential peace" and "ideal peace" might, thus, not be the same as Malay or Chinese views.

## 5. Concluding words

On the basis of the material presented and the discussion conducted above, I would now like to formulate some concluding hypotheses concerning:

- (i) which of the semantic dimensions involved in the analysis of conflict and conflict handling in Swedish might be universal and
- (ii) the nature of vocabulary structure in a semantic field.

For conflict, I believe all the main ten dimensions; "general - particular", "part - whole", "evaluation", "manner", "number of agents", "instruments", "temporal duration", "spatial location", "result orientation" and "institutional setting" have universal relevance in an intermediately strong sense. They occupy an intermediate position between universals in a very strong sense (features that without exception exist in all languages) and universals in a very weak sense (features that exist in at least one human language and therefore are humanly possible features of language).

They are, therefore, features which, I believe, will be relevant for a considerable number of languages. The most abstract features like "general - particular" and "part - whole" might even turn out to be universals in the strong sense. If this turns out to be the case, it probably, however, has more to do with a general feature of human conceptual organization than with the specific properties of conflict.

As for the features related to conflict handling and non-conflict, the general features of "process" and "state" as well as the features of "defocussing", "restricting" and "preventing" seem possible strong universals. On a somewhat more specific level, I think we will find that many languages, even if not all, have vocabulary for removing "disturbing sensory input", "incompatibility of interests", "negative mutual attitudes", "rank and status restrictions", and "negative obligations". I also think that the ideas of preventing conflict by creating similarities in attitude, mutual positive attitudes, adjusted demands and mutual informal and formal obligations will be very common. The reason for this is that I believe most of the features derive from basic human tendencies concerning altruism, egotism, social cohesion and the consequent need to communicate about these phenomena.

Turning to semantic structure, I would like to start by repeating that the field is an artificial structure on the type level created for the purpose of getting a general overview of a particular domain of content (in this case conflict and conflict handling). This means that instead of concrete word meanings determined in context through their relations to surrounding words and extralinguistic situation, we have been discussing

decontextualized type meanings. However, the words carry relations to their various contextual determinations which means that they can be seen as multiaspectual and polysemous. This, in turn, means that they might legitimately occur in several places in any structuring scheme for a particular conceptual domain. In general, we should not expect to find a semantic field with mutually exclusive categories.

The polysemy is, however, often tempered by what, perhaps, can be called the orientation or focus of a word. The referent which is primarily linked to a word is linked to it from a particular orientation, focussing on particular properties and not on others. This gives us possibilities of talking about the same thing in slightly different ways, from slightly different perspectives, with slightly different attitudes. If we want to be neutral we might describe a particular verbal exchange as a *debate*, whereas if we want to make fun of it, we might call it an instance of *bickering* and if we want to show admiration, we might call it an *exchange of ideas*. Thus, what we are analyzing in many semantic fields is not primarily the way a particular language structures the world extensionally. Rather we are analyzing the way that language allows us to talk about the world via aspects, perspectives, evaluations and other attitudes, which in a second step can give us an understanding of the perspectives, values and attitudes which are seen as important enough to be frequently communicated in a particular culture and language community.

### ***Acknowledgements***

I would like to thank Elisabeth Ahlsén, Hans-Jürgen Eikmeyer and Joakim Nivre for comments and discussion.

### **REFERENCES**

- Allwood, J. 1989. *Om begrepp - deras bestämning, analys och kommunikation* (ms). Göteborgs universitet, Institutionen för lingvistik.
- Allwood, J., & Asmah, H.O. 1994. *Concepts of Conflict and Conflict Resolution in Malay and Swedish*. (forthcoming).
- Aristotle 1938. *Categories. On Interpretation and Prior Analytics*. Translated by H.P. Cooke and H. Tredennick. London and Cambridge, Mass. Loeb Classical Library. Harvard University Press and W. Heineman Ltd.
- Boas, F. 1911. *Introduction in Handbook of American Indian Languages*. Vol. I. 1911-1939.
- Berlin, B. & Kay, P. 1969. *Basic Color Terms. Their Universality and Evolution*. Berkeley & Los Angeles: University of California Press.
- Herder, J.G. 1772. "Abhandlung über den Ursprung der Sprache", pp 1-56 in Suphan B. (ed.) *Herder's sämtliche Werke*. Berlin 1891, Vol. 5.
- Humboldt, W. von 1836. *Über die Verschiedenheit des menschlichen Sprachbaues und ihren Einfluss auf die geistige Entwicklung des Menschengeschlechts*. Bonn: Dümmler, 1968.
- Kainz, F. 1946. *Einführung in die Sprachpsychologie*. Vienna: A. Söxl.



- Kant, I. 1975. *Die Drei Kritiken*. Stuttgart: Alfred Kroner Verlag.
- Lakoff, G. 1987. *Women, Fire and Dangerous Things*. Chicago and London: University of Chicago Press.
- Langacker, R. 1987. *Foundations of Cognitive Grammar*. Stanford: Stanford University Press.
- Lehrer, A. 1974. *Semantic Fields and Lexical Structure*. London: North Holland.
- Leise, E. 1975. *Der Wortinhalt*. Heidelberg. UTB: Quelle und Meyer.
- Lyons, John 1977. *Semantics Vol I och II*, Cambridge University Press.
- Miller, G. & Johnson-Laird, P. 1976. *Language and Perception*. Cambridge, Mass: Harvard University Press.
- Rommetveit, R. 1974. *On Message Structure*. London: John Wiley and Sons.
- Sapir, E. 1921. *Language*. New York: Harcourt, Brace & World.
- Talmy, L. 1985. "Lexicalization Patterns: Semantic Structures in Lexical Forms", in T. Shopen (ed.) *Language Typology and Syntactic Description*, Vol. 3. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Trier, Jost 1931. *Der Deutsche Wortschatz im Sinnbezirk des Verstandes: Die Geschichte eines sprachlichen Feldes*. Heidelberg: Carl Winter.
- Viberg, Å. 1983. *Studier i kontrastiv lexikologi: Perceptionsverb*. Stockholm. SSM Report 8, Department of Linguistics, University of Stockholm.
- Weisgerber, L. 1953-54. "Vom Weltbild der deutschen Sprache" I-II. 1953-54.
- Whorf, B.L. 1956. *Language, Thought and Reality: Selected Writings of Benjamin Lee Whorf*. J. B. Carroll, (ed.). Cambridge, Mass: MIT Press.
- Wierzbicka, A. 1992. *Semantics, Culture, and Cognition. Universal Human Concepts in Culture-Specific Configurations*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Wilkins, J. 1668 *Essay towards a real character and a philosophical language*. London.