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Swedish terms of oppositeness

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In this project, opposites are examined and discussed, and a way of describing them from a cognitive perspective is suggested. Related research disagrees upon whether opposites are symmetrical, and whether concepts should be integrated in the relation of opposites. The Swedish opposites *levande* ‘alive’ and *död* ‘dead’ are studied thoroughly in order to provide empirical data. The results provide arguments in favour of an analysis in which opposites show semantic symmetry to some extent. When it comes to distribution and domains, however, opposites do not show symmetry. Further, it is argued that concepts should be included in the relation of opposites. The asymmetries found are related to markedness, information value, Aktionsart and the prototype of the word connected to referent of the subject/NP that one of the opposites describes.

Related publication:

Vogel, Anna. 2009. A cognitive approach to opposites: The case of Swedish *levande* ‘alive’ and *död* ‘dead’. *Varieng* 3 “Approaches to Language and Cognition”.

<http://www.helsinki.fi/varieng/journal/volumes/03/>