

PRÉCIS

Central Superior Services Examination (CSS) 1986

Passage.

One of the fundamental facts about words is that the most useful ones in our language have many meanings. That is partly why they are so useful: they work overtime... Think of -all the various things we mean by the word "foot" on different occasion: one of the lower extremities of the human body, a measure of verse, the ground about a tree, twelve inches, - the floor in front of the stairs. The same is true of nearly every common noun or verb...considering the number of ways of taking a particular word, the task of speaking clearly and being understood would seem pretty hopeless if it were not for another very important fact about language. Though a word may have many senses, these senses can be controlled, up to a point, by the context in which the word is used. When we find the word in a particular verbal setting -we can usually decide quite definitely which of the many senses of the word relevant. If a poet says his verse has feet, it doesn't occur to you that he could mean it's a yard long or is three legged (unless perhaps you are a critic planning to puncture the poet with a pun about his" lumping verse"). The context rules out these maverick senses quite decisively.

Final Draft

Art of using words
(Title with Marker)

Words used commonly have many meanings. A single word is used to describe many things. This applies to almost all nouns and verbs, and this multipurpose use of words has direct impact on effective communication. The use of words can be judged and controlled by the context in which they are used. Generally, they are sorted by their verbal settings. People also use these words as metaphors, and in such cases again it is context that defines the word.

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