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Аннотація

О. А. Кудря. Классификация цветообозначений в английском и украинском языках

В статье анализируются цветообозначения, выбранные из английских и украинских лексикографических источников. В частности, автор концентрирует свое внимание на разграничении понятий «производные», «первичные» и «вторичные» цветообозначения. В статье также рассматриваются лексико-грамматические особенности исследуемые единицы.

Ключевые слова: цветообозначения, вторичная цветовая номинация.

Анотація

О. А. Кудря. Класифікація кольоропозначень в англійській та українській мовах

У статті проаналізовано кольоропозначення, дібрані з англійських та українських лексикографічних джерел. Зокрема, автор зосереджує увагу на розмежуванні понять «похідні», «первинні» та «вторинні» кольоропозначення. У статті розглянуто також лексико-граматичні особливості досліджуваних одиниць.

Ключові слова: кольоропозначення, вторинна колірна номінація.

Abstract

O. A. Kudrya. The Classification of Colour Terms in English and Ukrainian

The group of colour terms is studied in psychological, philological, ethnolinguistic, historical, physiological and other aspects. In English and Ukrainian linguistics colour terms are usually classified into basic, non-basic, secondary etc. The given article deals with colour terms selected from English and Ukrainian dictionaries. The author of the article pays special attention to the differentiation of the definitions “derived”, “primary” and “secondary” colour terms. The article also studies lexico-grammatical peculiarities of the analyzed units.

The results of the analysis testify to the fact that the definitions “derived” and “secondary” are not synonymic. The latter can be both derived (secondary adjectives) and non-derived (secondary nouns) colour terms. Derived colour terms not always have the secondary colour semantics for the derived from nouns colour terms can have primary colour meaning in English and Ukrainian dictionaries.

The problems of English and Ukrainian colour terms description and classification are still open in modern linguistics and require special consideration.

Key words: colour terms, secondary colour nomination.

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УДК 811.161.1:81'373

THE CONSTANT OF POLYSEMANTICISM

One of the language phenomena is polysemanticism which reflects the dynamic character of the lexicon. *This paper deals with synchronical and diachronical analysis of polysemantic nouns of the Russian language. The purpose of the article is to investigate the number correlation between the degree of the word polysemy and the chronological stability of the word¹.*

Comparing the number of meanings in the polysemantic nouns the researcher can put forward two mutually exclusive hypotheses:

1. With the development of language the number of word meanings grows, that is, there is the increase in number of bisemantic, three-semantic, four-semantic nouns.

¹ Проект выполнен в рамках государственного задания НИУ “БелГУ” на 2013 г. (проект 6.8195.2013)

2. With the development of language the identical correlation of monosemy, bisemy, and polysemy remains, that is, the percentage of mono-, bi-, three-, four-semantic nouns against the total number of nouns is approximately the same.

The first hypothesis seems to be true and evident, since no words appear with two, especially with three, four, five meanings. The derivative meanings are formed gradually, step-by-step.

The second, polar, hypothesis seems to be doubtful even on the theoretical level. With the development of language the meanings of nouns change both in terms of quantity and quality. Taking into account the last statement, is it right to lead the conversation towards the identical correlation of monosemy, bisemy, and polysemy? If the number of nouns, keeping their semantic structure without visible changes, is extremely small, is it legitimate to put the question about the retention of percentage of monosemantic and polysemantic words (during the centuries, not decades!)? Nevertheless we decided to verify the second hypothesis. For that purpose we took the equal quantity of nouns (in groups of 2500 units) in the Old Russian language (two periods of Ancient Russian and Old Russian) and the Modern Russian language. Diachronic analysis was carried out on the basis of “The Dictionary of the Russian Language of the XI–XVII centuries” [6, v.v. 2–4]. Synchronous analysis was carried out on the data from “The Dictionary of the Russian Language”, edited by A. P. Yevgenjeva [7, v.1, p. 132–352]. The words were arranged in the alphabetical order for the most exactness.

All the nouns were distributed according to the number of meanings. The monosemantic words with the fixed shades of meaning were regarded as the monosemantic ones. Here we supported the idea of the compilers of the dictionaries, though many researchers of monosemy consider the monosemy of such words extremely unstable [2, p. 34].

According to the number of meanings noted in the dictionaries, 2550 nouns were distributed in the following way:

The Old Russian Language. The nouns with: one meaning – 1891 (75,64%), two meanings – 399 (15,96%), three meanings – 116 (4,64%), four meanings – 51 (2,04%), five meanings – 23 (0,92%), six meanings – 10 (0,4%), seven meanings – 2, eight meanings – 3, nine meanings – 0, ten meanings – 1, eleven meanings – 1, twelve meanings – 2, thirteen meanings – 1 (altogether – 0,4% ultrapolysemantic nouns).

The Modern Russian Language. The nouns with: one meaning – 1848 (73,52%), two meanings – 465 (18,6%), three meanings – 116 (5,08%), four meanings – 39 (1,56%), five meanings – 12 (0,48%), six meanings – 4 (0,16%), seven meanings – 3, eight meanings – 1, nine meanings – 1 (altogether – 0,4% ultrapolysemantic nouns).

To verify the obtained “constants” we counted the words in the similar way in two other related sections of the dictionaries: “The Dictionary of the Russian Language of the XI–XVII centuries” [6, v.v. 4–5, p. 163–319], “The Russian Language Dictionary” [7, v. 1, p. 359–607]. The results turned out practically identical (they are given below).

The Old Russian Language. The nouns with: one meaning – 1997 (79,88%), two meanings – 308 (12,32%), three meanings – 111 (4,44%), four meanings – 49 (1,96%), five meanings – 18 (0,72%), six meanings – 9 (0,36%), seven meanings – 4, eight meanings – 2, nine meanings – 0, ten meanings – 1 (altogether – 0,32% ultrapolysemantic nouns).

The Modern Russian Language. The nouns with: one meaning – 1859 (74,36%), two meanings – 463 (18,52%), three meanings – 112 (4,48%), four meanings – 43 (1,72%), five meanings – 11 (0,44%), six meanings – 7 (0,28%), seven meanings – 0, eight meanings – 3, nine meanings – 1, fifteen meanings – 1 (altogether – 0,2% ultrapolysemantic nouns).

Thus, comparing the number of monosemantic, bisemantic, three-semantic nouns in the Old Russian language and the Modern Russian Language, we can see that their share against the total number of nouns is practically identical. Summing up the data, we can derive the mean index for the different temporal cuts of the Russian Language: it is equal to 75,95% – for monosemantic nouns, 16,35% – for bisemantic nouns, 4,66% – for three-semantic nouns, 1,82% – for four-semantic nouns. As for the most number of meanings in the word, we need much more samples to determine the quantitative threshold. Although the nouns with 10 to 14 meanings are not mentioned in the sections of the dictionary under study, it does not prove the fact of absence of such nouns in the Modern Russian language. As for the lesser number of meanings, the proportions, given above, seem to be correct.

Let us consider some disputable conclusions, made after the quantitative analysis. Comparing monosemantic and polysemantic words in the Russian language, we could conclude, that the noun monosemy is more typical than polysemy both in synchrony and diachrony. In fact, we have 3888

and 3707 nouns per 5000 nouns in synchrony and diachrony, respectively. It is not fair, however, to claim the priority of monosemy on these grounds. The plenty of monosemy exists, firstly, due to the huge number of word-building variants, competing with each other: “доморникъ” and “домрачей” (“a musician, playing the domra, Russian stringed folk instrument”), “декламация” and “декламирование”. Secondly, it exists due to the compounds: “благоязычие”, “высокоимение”, “доброзрачие” (in Old Russian), “водомоина”, “высотомер” (in Modern Russian). The percentage of polysemantic words increases also due to the strictly specialized words: “галанка”, “гамась” (in the history of language), “вулканизация”, “вулканолог” (in the modern language). Turning back to the quantitative indices, it should be noted, that the conclusion about the priority of bisemy (as some researchers suppose) is also false [3, p. 78]. It is illegal to state the typical nature of the words with two meanings and the non-typical nature of the words with, for instance, seven meanings, for the noun with seven meanings works as seven nouns in the language. As an example, we could observe the meaning of the polysemantic word “рука” [4]. The ultrapolysemantic words represent the kernel of the lexical system, and the richest word-building possibilities of the Russian language make the increase of meanings unnecessary and redundant. As it is known, word-building and polysemy are mutually balanced.

Percentage coincidence of monosemantic, polysemantic and ultrapolysemantic words in synchrony and diachrony is a notable, but an unexpected fact. As a rule, when two separate words are compared with each other from the atomic approach, there are some essential discrepancies between the historical and the modern status of the language. The word-meaning experienced the intensive mutations, provoked by the extralinguistic causes. Such changes led to the splitting the words into homonyms, therefore the number of the words changed.

Thus, in the history of the language there was a noun “видение”, with six meanings, many of them had some shades of meaning. In the Modern Russian language there are two nouns: “видение” with three meanings, and “вИдение” with one meaning and one shade. As for the noun “воскресение”, it has been broken up into two words-homonyms. There are a lot of such examples in Russian. The opposite cases, however, when the words have saved their meanings over the centuries, are also of great interest. In Old Russian the noun “вопь” meant “a loud cry, yell” with the shade of meaning “a call for help”. The dictionaries of Modern Russian fix the same semantic formula of this noun: “a very loud cry”, “a furious cry for help, expressing the horror, despair etc.” The ultrapolysemantic words are much more interesting. Their meanings have not changed for centuries. Let us observe the noun “венец”.

Венець. 1. Wreath. 2. The symbol of rewards and honours. 3. Decoration. 4. Precious headgear, a crown. 5. Coronation. 6. Church wedding ceremony. 7. Monastic headgear, a kind of a headband. 8. Aureole, radiance, shine around a glowing thing. 9. Halo, the nimbus around Holies' heads. 10. Rim, the illet around something. 11. Completion, the highest degree of something. 12. One of the beams in the wooden blockhouse [6, v. 2, p. 72–74].

Венец. 1. Dated word: Wreath. 2. Precious headgear, a crown, a symbol of monarch's power. 3. Crown, put on the heads of a couple in the church during the wedding ceremony // Coll.: Church wedding ceremony. 4. The top of all, the height, the peak. 5. The light, rainbow ring around the Sun, the Moon, the bright stars // Bright shining around Holies' heads, the nimbus. 6. Every horizontal raw of beams in the wooden blockhouse [7, v. 1, p. 148].

In the history of linguistics A. A. Potebnya interpreted brilliantly the semantic immutability of the words: “Something old in the language is the base of something new, but only in two ways: partially, it can be renewed on other conditions and with other start; partially, it changes its form and meaning due to somewhat new” [5, p. 125]. We cannot, but agree with the statement by L. S. Kovtun: “The history is not only in the meaning of the words, transformed into other words, but it is in the meaning of the words, seemed to be immutable. What is behind the centuries-old stability of such meanings?” Answering the question, L. S. Kovtun accentuates, that the changing of lexical links is not always accompanied by the changing of logical content, which makes the meaning steady and unsteady simultaneously [1, p. 82–83]. This paradox of development is obviously seen in the examples of the centuries-old metaphors “орел, сокол, свет, гнездо” (“eagle, falcon, light, nest”).

The fact, that the degree of polysemantics is close to the constant (both in synchrony and diachrony), gives the reason to think over gnosiology of monosemantic words. It states the principal necessity of the wide stratum of monosemantic words. The segment of 75,95% of nouns with one meaning shows

the size of the reserve bank of concepts, the fount of speech metaphors, working on polysemantics and ultrapolysemantics. It is the field of monosemy, necessary for optimal functioning of the language. The discussion about the necessity of words “имідж” or “консенсус” stands no longer. It takes you only to look through the historical dictionaries to be convinced, that the height of the pyramid, the height of our linguistic thinking, depends on the width of the base of this pyramid, on the richness of the various words, including exotisms.

“To look through” the dictionaries, however, is insufficient. We, using the data of the Dictionary of the XI–XVII centuries, have calculated how many words left and disappeared, against the research projection per quantity of meanings in the word. The more meanings the nouns took over the historical period, the more immutable the words turned out. If among monosemantic nouns 1421 nouns have disappeared, and 514 nouns have remained, then among bisemantic nouns – 211 nouns have disappeared, and 197 nouns have remained (the proportion is practically the same). Then the growth of immunity begins. Among three-semantic nouns 43 nouns have disappeared, and 73 nouns have remained. As for the words with six meanings and more, practically all of them have remained so far (with some rare exceptions). Thus, among the nouns with six meanings 9 words have remained, 1 word has disappeared; with seven meanings – 2 words have remained, no word has disappeared; with eight meanings just 3 words have remained. We found out no words with nine meanings in the sections of the dictionary under study. Among the nouns with ten, eleven and thirteen meanings one word has remained, that is, the word has not sunk into oblivion. Finally, 2 nouns with twelve meanings have remained.

In our research we met not once the problem of the shade of meaning. In linguistics the shade is regarded as prognosis, the evidence of further development of meaning. S. N. Murane says, that the shades are the signals of transition from monosemantic words to polysemantic ones [2, p. 34]. In fact, once monosemantic nouns “визг, великолетие, вирши” now have the shade in the meaning, fixed in the dictionary. For instance, “визг” – “a high, shrill sound, produced by an object”. It is important to add, that the shades of meaning could be the rate of quite opposite process: the transition from polysemantic word to monosemantic one. In the word “взор” there were two meanings, now there is one meaning with two shades. Once three-semantic noun “весть” is used today in one meaning with one shade. Bisemantic noun “весна” has turned into monosemantic with the figurative shade of use. The shades of meanings are not only a plan, prospect, prognosis, program of meaning development, but the retrospection of this development, a real shade of former meanings, the evidence, the trace of disappearing or disappeared polysemantism.

Thus, according to our research, the share of monosemantic, bisemantic and three-semantic nouns in the history of language and in the modern language is the quantity close to the constant, the constant in itself. It indicates that 70% of monosemy supports 30% threshold of polysemy in the language, but the richness in the meanings of polysemantic and, especially, ultrapolysemantic nouns “closes” the perception of this phenomenon.

Prospects of further investigation are connected with the necessity to study the “polysemantism rate constant” based on the new source of material in Russian and other languages. Clarifying the percentage of monosemantic nouns in favour of “Golden Section”, i.e 0,6 rather than 0,7 is not improbable provided semantically unstable nouns are considered as units imparting two meanings.

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Аннотация

В. К. Харченко. Константа многозначности

Путем сопоставления числа имён существительных по материалам словарей в диахронии и синхронии русского языка установлено, что процент однозначных, двузначных, трёхзначных слов есть величина постоянная. Однозначных слов в языке содержится порядка 70–75%. Исследуется также числовая корреляция между степенью многозначности слова и его хронологической устойчивостью. Всё это позволяет более доверительно относиться к “поток заимствований”.

Ключевые слова: наращение смыслов, метафора, многозначность, однозначность.

Анотація

В. К. Харченко. Константа багатозначності

Шляхом зіставлення числа іменників за матеріалами словників у діахронії і синхронії російської мови встановлено, що відсоток однозначних, двозначних, тризначних слів є величина постійна. Однозначних слів у мові нараховується приблизно 70–75%. Досліджено також числову кореляцію між ступенем багатозначності слова та його хронологічною стійкістю. Усе це дозволяє ставитись із більшою довірою до “поток запозичень”.

Ключові слова: нарощування смислів, метафора, багатозначність, однозначність.

Abstract

V. K. Kharchenko. The Constant of Polysemanticism

In the paper two mutually exclusive hypotheses have been put forward: 1. With the development of language the number of word meanings grows, that is, there is the increase in number of bisemantic, three-semantic, four-semantic nouns; 2. With the development of language the identical correlation of monosemy, bisemy, and polysemy remains, that is, the percentage of mono-, bi-, three-, four-semantic nouns against the total number of nouns is approximately the same. By means of synchronical and diachronical analysis of the number of nouns from the dictionaries of the Russian language it has been established that the percentage of monosemantic, bisemantic, three-semantic words is the constant. In Russian the monosemantic nouns come to 70–75%. The number correlation between the degree of the word polysemy and the chronological stability of the word has been investigated. It has been stated that the noun monosemy is more typical than polysemy both in synchrony and diachrony. It gives the possibility to be more confident in the “stream of loanwords”. Prospects of further investigation are connected with the necessity to study the “polysemanticism rate constant” based on the new source of material in Russian and other languages.

Key words: multiplication of meanings, metaphor, monosemy, polysemy.