

CAUSES AND TYPES OF SEMANTIC WORD CHANGES

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Annotation: This article reveals theoretical aspects of semantic changes in the English language, investigates its types and causes. External and internal factors in change of meaning of words are explained as well as shifts in the meaning of synonymic fields of words.

Key words: language, lexical meaning, polysemantic words, typology of semantic changes, extralinguistic.

Language is an integral part of human life. Without it, undoubtedly, modern society, in principle, could not exist. It is language that forms the basis of our thinking, allows us to fully express our emotions, ideas and desires. The smallest and key unit of the language is the word - the concept itself is very controversial, difficult to concretize and describe. The word is the element that can contain an incredible variety of concepts and meanings, thanks to which we have the opportunity to characterize the world around. But what is the meaning of the word? The study of words, their interaction and occurrence, shades of meaning - all this is the goal of lexicology and semantics. Nothing in the world stands still, and the language with its vocabulary is no exception. Over time, not only the appearance and sound of words can change, but also their semantic content.

The actual question is what kind of semantic transformations are carried out in the process of language development and the functioning and evolution of the word, about the ways of transformation when new meanings arise. Semantics, the center of language, is the landmark of the existence and purpose of the language, the meaning of linguistic creativity [1]. The study of the causes and nature of semantic changes is still a significant and discussed topic. As a tool for studying words, semantic and component analyzes are used. They are necessary to identify linguistic content and are constantly produced in science. Semantic analysis is a stage in the sequence of actions of the algorithm for automatic understanding of texts, which consists in highlighting semantic relations, forming a semantic representation of texts. Semantic analysis within a single sentence is called local semantic analysis. The result of the semantic analysis of texts are semantic networks - information models that look like a directed graph. The vertices of the graph correspond to the objects, and the arcs define the relationships between them. Objects can be concepts, events, properties, processes.

Thus, the semantic network is one of the ways to systematize and visualize knowledge. Component analysis is a method of studying the content of meaningful units of a language, the purpose of which is to decompose the meaning into minimal semantic components. It is based on the hypothesis that the meaning of any linguistic unit consists of semantic components and the vocabulary of a language can be described using a relatively small number of semantic features. Accordingly, component analysis consists in isolating semes in the meaning of words and is carried out by building binary oppositions. As a result of working with component analysis, a semantic field is compiled - the largest semantic paradigm that combines words of different parts of speech, the meanings of which have one common semantic feature. It can be defined as a series of words or their individual meanings, connected by paradigmatic relationships, having a common semantic feature and differing in at least one differential feature. Thus, the words "kind" and "unkind" are distinguished by the seme of negation. An example of a semantic field is the following group of words: "light" - light, flash, lightning, shine, sparkle, bright, etc.

To sort the field, select the dominant in the field. Dominant is a word that can serve as the name of the field as a whole. In the example above, the dominant word is "light". Fields are synonymous and hyponymic. In the synonymous field, the dominant is included in the field along with other members of this field. If the dominant rises above other elements of the field, then such a field is called hyponymic. The distinctive feature of the word has already been mentioned above - its ability to "name". This is the main, nominative, function of the word. It manifests itself in the presence of lexical meaning - the correlation of the sound shell of the word with the corresponding objects or phenomena of objective reality.

The lexical meaning does not include the entire set of features inherent in any object, phenomenon, action, etc., but only the most significant ones that help to distinguish one object from another. The lexical meaning reveals the signs by which common properties are determined for a number of objects, actions, phenomena, and also establishes differences that distinguish this object, action, phenomenon. "The meaning of a word is not a simple set of factors ..., but their sequence or sequences ordered in a certain way." [5] The term "lexical" or "meaning of a word" cannot be considered quite definite. The lexical meaning of a word is usually understood as its subject-material content, designed according to the laws of the grammar of a given language and being an element of the general semantic system of the dictionary of this language.

The lexical meaning of a word is traditionally given in explanatory dictionaries. It should be noted that not all words of the Russian language have lexical meaning. For example, prepositions, particles, conjunctions are not able to name

objects of objective reality. A word can have one lexical meaning, an example of this is single-valued words: “noun”, “tangent”, “syntax”, etc. Words that have two, three or more lexical meanings are called polysemantic: pen, key, nose, etc... Polysemantic words are found among all independent parts of speech, except for numerals. It is possible to determine the specific meaning of a polysemantic word only in the context, the environment of other words.

New meanings develop as a result of various semantic changes and shifts. One of the main tasks of semantics, in addition to identifying the specific meaning of a word, is to find out the reasons for the appearance of this meaning and the interaction of words with each other. A semantic shift is a change in the lexical meaning of a word. In addition to semantics, etymology also deals with semantic shifts. The results of semantic shifts are differences in the meaning of the same lexeme in different historical periods of language development. For example, the presence of the word “closet” meanings “a room in the theater where the actors are preparing to go on stage” - “a room in which they dress, put their appearance in order” - “a place to cope with natural needs”. The study and systematization of semantic shifts were carried out by such scientists as Leonard Bloomfield, Andreas Blank, M. Breal, S. Ullman, A. Darmsteter and many others. They elaborated on their works in the 19th and 20th centuries, and each offered his own typology of semantic shifts.

The most common is the typology according to Andreas Blank: 1)Metaphorization; 2)Metonymization; The main difference between metonymy and metaphor is the gradual loss of the original meaning and its shades of the concept. Only neighboring links of such a chain of name transfer can be explained, while the connection of subsequent links goes from one to the other sequentially, which fundamentally distinguishes metonymy from metaphor. 3)Narrowing of the meaning (also "enrichment of the meaning", "semantic specialization", "concretization of the meaning", "reduction of the semantic volume"); 4) Expansion of meaning (also "generalization", "depletion of meaning", "generalization of meaning", "increase in semantic volume"); 5) Shifts (in English "cohyponymic transfer"); 6) Antiphrasis ; 7) Enantiosemy ; 8) Auto conversion ; 9) Ellipsis; 10) Folk etymology. It is worth noting that the transfer of meanings in words occurs in accordance with linguistic laws.

A language law is a general pattern of change in meaning, derived from similar changes in the meanings of words in one or different languages.

The linguistic law has a certain chronological framework, its distinctive feature is its universality. As has already been revealed, semantic transformations are actively taking place at the present stage and reflect different directions, types and varieties of language units. Among them, there are simple, one-link, one-way and internally non-detailed transformations of the semantics of words. However, in addition to identifying

the very fact of the presence of such changes, it is also necessary to establish the reason for the transfer of value in each of the cases under consideration. It is also important what changes in usage and meaningful shifts correspond to the language system, it is necessary to pay attention to whether certain transformations are regular.

The reasons for language changes are diverse, they can be caused by both external and internal factors. According to their origin, they are divided into linguistic, psychological, historical, socio-cultural and cultural. All of them, in turn, form two large groups: extralinguistic and linguistic causes of semantic shifts.

1) Extralinguistic: the causes of this group are determined by the social nature of the language, since they are associated with the development of the human mind and correspond to its needs. This includes such components as social, historical, psychological reasons for changing the meanings of words. - Social reasons are that the word acquires a new meaning as a result of its use by a certain social group, or as a result of the transition of the word from one social sphere to another. — Historical reasons suggest changes in the life of the cultural and linguistic community, in socio-economic development and in material culture as a result of the activities of social groups. This includes language contacts and migrations. Borrowing vocabulary, elements of grammar and phonetics from other languages also has a significant impact on the native speaker's understanding of his native language and the meaning of some words. - Psychological reasons for changing meanings are based on the action of associations by similarity, adjacency and contrast. The reason for the appearance of a new meaning in a word is proposed to be sought in an extralinguistic impulse, in the need of those who communicate to give a name to a new object or shade of thought, as well as in the mental properties of a person, for example, imagination and fantasy.

2) Linguistic: much less is known about the linguistic causes of semantic changes than about extralinguistic ones. In working with them, it is necessary to constantly monitor the interaction and interdependence of vocabulary units in language and speech. Thus, the development of new meanings, as well as a complete change in lexical meaning, can occur as a result of the influence of other words, mostly synonyms, as well as due to ellipsis or as a result of ambiguity in certain contexts. In addition, the following factors become the causes of semantic changes:

1) The desire to save language means, which means that speakers are trying to increase the efficiency of communication and convey maximum information using a minimum set of tools. Another name for the principle of economy is the principle of least effort. According to this principle, speakers strive to make as little effort as possible to produce speech, naturally, to the extent that this does not interfere with speech recognition by the addressee. Normally, a new "economical" form coexists with

the old one and has a chance to gain a foothold in the language if it demonstrates its own effectiveness.

2) The principle of analogy, according to which, in the course of historical development, morphological forms tend to become like those elements of the paradigm that are most frequent, or follow the patterns of inflection characteristic of larger classes of words.

Language is a mirror of the world around us and human consciousness. It reflects all the changes taking place in society. Changes in the language entail the transformation of linguistic units and are themselves made up of their transformations. There are a great many varieties of semantic changes, each of them is due to its own set of causes and conditions. In the process of communication, various meanings are generated, and subsequently new meanings arise. Each of them is unique in its own way, changeable and sometimes even elusive. Expansion, narrowing of meanings testify to the active life of the language and social consciousness, they cause the unceasing development of vocabulary and contribute to word formation.

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