

The Real Psycholinguistic Meaning of a Word and Metaphorically Reinterpreted Component Correlation (Based on English Phraseological Units)¹

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Abstract

A real psycholinguistic meaning of a word can be realized as a well-ordered unity of all semantic components connected with the its sound in a mother-tongue speaker's linguistic consciousness. The paper under study presents the analysis of a real psycholinguistic meaning of a word and metaphorically reinterpreted component correlation based on phraseological units related to phraseosemantic field "Musical Knowledge" in the English language. As a result of this analysis it was proved that there is a disparity and in certain cases even a contradiction between a real psycholinguistic meaning of a word and the meaning of the phraseological unit. It can be explained by the fact that associations underlying phraseological units are based on some prototype situations and their meaning is easily predicted from such situations. The analysis has also shown partial and complete correlation between a real psycholinguistic nominative meaning of a word and the seme actualized from the meaning of the phraseological meaning itself. However, our analysis has revealed only several of such cases.

Keywords: Metaphorically Reinterpreted Component; Phraseological Unit; Prototype Situation; Seme.

1. Introduction

Lexicographical and psycholinguistic meaning reflect a mother-tongue speaker's linguistic consciousness, i.e., consciousness featured, defined and actualized in the language sign meanings (Sternin & Rudakova, 2011;

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Cambridge English Dictionary: Definitions & Meanings). The meaning of the word can be depicted by means of analysis and generalization of fixed contexts of the given word usage. Such communicative meaning reflects meanings and semantic components which are relevant at the present point in time of linguistic consciousness development, i.e. fixed in texts under study (Sternin & Rudakova, 2011; Kunin, 1970; Alkhateeb, 2019).

Communicative-semantic analysis is a component description of lexeme meanings under study in contexts with the word usage generalization and the generalized definition formation of a communicative meaning, the detecting of commonly and not commonly used, modern, old and new meanings, the component variability of meanings in context ... in modern linguistic consciousness (Sternin & Rudakova, 2011; AC03763025, 2001).

From this perspective, therefore, a psycholinguistic meaning of a word is well-ordered unity of all semantic components which are really connected with a given sound outer covering in language speakers' consciousness. It is the amount of semantic components which actualizes taken in isolation word in language speakers' consciousness, in all semantic components constituting unity – more or less bright, nuclear and peripheral. In other words, a psycholinguistic meaning is a psychologically real word meaning (Sternin, 2005; Schuklina, 2016; Oxford Dictionary of Idioms, 2004).

2. Methods

The theoretical framework for the study under analysis is based on works of semantics and psycholinguistics by Apresyan (1974, 1995), Arutyunova (2000), Vinogradov (1986), Vygotsky (1996), Dashiyeva (1999), Zalevskaya (1977, 1990, 1999, 2005), Kubryakova (1999), Sternin (1981, 1985, 2004, 2005), Ufimtseva (1977, 1997, 2000, 2001, 2003), Chomsky (1972) and many others. In order to characterize the meaning of words as a fact of linguistic consciousness a method of semantic interpretation of associates can be used. A component interpretation of associates technique as objectivation of separate semantic components of a stimulus word semantics provides a real psycholinguistic meaning of a word establishment as a language speaker's linguistic consciousness phenomenon (Fridman, 2006; Arutyunova, 1979; English Living Oxford Dictionaries).

3. Results and Discussion

The connotative semes are included into a real psycholinguistic meaning reflecting different kinds of associative criteria, the ones which are the basis of metaphor “current representations about realia classes” and which, according to Arutyunova's point of view, do not belong to language semantics, but do belong all

together to awareness of the world (Arutyunova, 1979; Fathi, & Dastoori, 2014). Expressive word formation, reflecting the forms of evaluating activity of consciousness, allow to understand the process of the world perception better, to explore the picture of the world values, the whole palette of feelings ... (Schuklina, 2016; The Idioms – Largest Idioms Dictionary).

Pershaeva (1982) experimentally defined a real psycholinguistic meaning of zoomorphisms. On the example of “*dog, hare, cow, bear*” language metaphors the author shows how the metaphor symbol crystallizes the semes which do not lie on the surface in a real psycholinguistic meaning. The metaphor symbol, however, is formed in different ways. The reinterpreted into a metaphor seme can be transformed and intensified in a metaphorical meaning. For instance, the seme “to bite” reinterpreted in the process of metaphorization into the semes “cruel” and “savage” in the language metaphor “dog”. In other cases, there can be found a nontransformed (“pure”) seme in a real psycholinguistic meaning, but it can be undetected among other semes, does not prevail over them, as, for example, the seme “clumsy” in a real psycholinguistic meaning of the word *bear*. Our study is based on Pershaeva’s data to demonstrate the seme correlation actualized in phraseological units under study and a real psycholinguistic meaning of a word (Pershaeva, 1982).

The lexical-semantic transference in the speech ... refers to transferring the meaning of a word identical in meaning of one language to another (Sibgaeva et al., 2018). Consequently, real psycholinguistic nominative meaning of the word “gamut” is “the entire scale of musical notes, i.e. a series of notes differing in pitch according to a specific scheme (usually within an octave). The seme “scale” was actualized from the meaning of the phraseological unit “to run (whole) gamut of something – experience, display, or perform the complete *range* of something”.

The word “note” has the following real psycholinguistic nominative meaning “a character, variously formed, to indicate the length of a tone, and variously placed upon the staff to indicate its pitch; a musical sound; a tone; an utterance; a tune; a key of the piano or organ”. The seme “wrong impression” was actualized from the meaning of the phraseological unit “to strike a false note – to indicate or give *impression* that something is *wrong*, disingenuous, or deceitful”.

The real psycholinguistic nominative meaning of the word “alt” is “high pitch, of a voice or instrument; especially, the octave above the top line of the treble stave beginning with the second G above middle C”. The seme “heightened emotional condition” was actualized from the meaning of the phraseological unit “in alt – a state of excitement, a *heightened emotional condition*”.

In the word “opera” the following real psycholinguistic nominative meaning can be abstracted “a theatrical piece that tells a story totally through the music. It consists of recitatives which provide the narrative plot line and elaborate chorus singing, along with duets and arias”. The seme “continuance” can be actualized from the meaning of the phraseological unit “soap opera,

a series of television or radio programs about the lives and problems of a particular group of characters. The series continues over a *long period* and is broadcast (several times) every week.”

The real psycholinguistic meaning of the word “concert” is “a musical composition for instruments in which a solo instrument is set off against an orchestral ensemble; a harmony of sounds, things, or persons; a set of instruments; an agreement. The seme “out of concord” was actualized from the following phraseological unit “cat’s (dutch) concert – a so-called concert in which all the singers sing *at the same time different* songs”.

In the word “song” the real psycholinguistic nominative meaning is the following: “a relatively brief, simple vocal composition, usually a setting of a poetic text, often strophic, for accompanied solo voice” and the seme “repetition” actualized in the phraseological unit “to sing the same song – to continue to express the *same ideas* or opinions that you have expressed before” is “repetition”.

The all above explained examples show a complete disparity between a real psycholinguistic nominative meaning of the phraseological unit component and the meaning of the phraseological unit. The following cases under analysis show almost a complete correspondence between the real psycholinguistic nominative meaning of the phraseological unit and its meaning. For example, the real psycholinguistic meaning of the word “accord” can be distinguished as “a harmonious union of sounds, colors, etc.” The seme “unity” was actualized in the phraseological unit “with one accord – doing something *together* and in complete agreement”. In the word “chorus” the real psycholinguistic meaning is the following: “a group of performers who, as a team, have a supporting position singing”. The seme “group” is actualized from the phraseological unit “to swell the chorus – to add one’s voice to the *majority* opinion”.

But there are some cases of the so-called “pure” seme, when the real psycholinguistic meaning of the phraseological unit fully coincides with the meaning of the phraseological unit. For example, in the word “tune” the following real psycholinguistic nominative meaning can be distinguished “a rhythmical, melodious, symmetrical series of tones for one voice or instrument, or for any number of voices or instruments in unison, or two or more such series forming parts in harmony; a melody”. The seme “harmony” can be actualized from the phraseological unit “to be in tune with – to be in the proper pitch, in *harmony*; in agreement with (someone)”. The real psycholinguistic nominative meaning of the word “string” is “a thin or cord that is stretched across a musical instrument and produces musical notes when touched, pulled or hit”. The seme “touch” was actualized in the phraseological unit “to touch a string – to *touch* someone on a tender place”.

4. Summary

In most cases there is a disparity between a real psycholinguistic nominative meaning of the phraseological unit component and the meaning of the phraseological unit itself. It can be explained by the fact that associations underlying the metaphorically reinterpreted component of the phraseological unit are mostly originated from the prototype situation. Semes are identified from the reinterpreted meaning of the phraseological unit in a prototype situation, but not from a real psycholinguistic meaning of the phraseological unit component. Language cannot be considered separately from the culture, so not accidentally the researchers' appeal to the linguistic-cultural potential of phraseological units, rendering of the so-called background knowledge, which can not affect the features of phraseological meaning through their form (Gataullina et al., 2016)

But in some cases in English we could identify some correspondence between a real psycholinguistic meaning of the phraseological unit component and the meaning of the phraseological unit itself. In the English language the seme "unity" are modified into the seme "together" in "accord" component; the seme "harmony" is modified into the seme "harmony" in "tune" component (a "pure" seme); the seme "a group of performers" is modified into the seme "majority" in "chorus" component; the seme "touch" into the seme "touch" in "string" component (a "pure" seme).

5. Conclusions

A prototype situation underlying the phraseological unit corresponds the literal meaning of the phraseological unit. For instance, in "to play the second fiddle" there is a prototype situation when in the orchestra apart from the first fiddle they have the second ones which play minor roles. This situation has the original content which is reinterpreted afterwards, i.e. the image of the phraseological unit is formed on the basis of primary word meanings. While reinterpreting the name different kinds of associations occur in our mind, which cannot be reconstructed without knowledge of historical background of name transfer acts themselves.

As the majority of phraseological units under analysis belong to a communicative type, we consider it expedient to single out prototype situations for them as these situations are actually frames, establishing themselves in time and space as a sequence of separate episodes. However, "personality perceives an object not according to space and time, but also according to the meaning, containing cultural stereotypes and models" (Davletbayeva et al., 2016).

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