

SEMANTIC FIELD OF WORDS DENOTING “FAMILY AND KINSHIP TERMS” IN ENGLISH

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Abstract

A further subdivision within the lexico-grammatical groups is achieved in the well-known thematic subgroups, such as terms of kinship, names for parts of human body, colour terms, military terms and so on. The basis of grouping this time is not only linguistic but also extra-linguistic: the words are associated because the things they name occur together and are closely connected in reality. It has been found that these words constitute quite definitely articulated spheres held together by differences, oppositions and distinctive values. For an example it is convenient to turn to the adjectives. These are known to be subdivided into qualitative and relative. Among the first, adjectives that characterize a substance for shape, color, physical or mental qualities, speed, size etc. are distinguished.

Key words:

lexico-grammatical, kinship

The group of color terms has always attracted the attention of linguists because it permits research of lexical problems of primary importance. The most prominent among them is the problem of the systematic or non-systematic character of vocabulary and of the relationship between thought and language. There are many hundreds of articles written about color terms.

V.A. Moskovitch gives a clear systematic description of this microsystem in English. The basic color name system comprises four words: *blue, green, yellow, red*; they cover the whole spectrum. All the other words denoting colors bring details into this scheme and form subsystems of the first and second order, which may be considered as synonymic series with corresponding basic terms as their dominants. Thus *red* is taken as a dominant for the subsystem of the first order: *scarlet, orange, crimson, rose* and the subsystem of the second degree is: *vermilion, wine red, cherry, coral, copper-red*, etc. Words belonging to the basic system differ from words belonging to subsystems not only semantically but in some other features as well. These features are:

- (1) frequency of use;
- (2) motivation;
- (3) simple or compound character;
- (4) stylistic coloring;
- (5) combining power.

The basic terms, for instance, are frequent words belonging to the first thousand of words in H.S. Eaton's "Semantic frequency list"; their motivation is lost in present-day English. They are all native words of long standing. The motivation of color terms in the subsystems is very clear: they are derived from the names of fruit (*orange*), flowers (*pink*), coloring stuffs (*indigo*). Basic system words and most of the first degree terms are root words, the second degree terms are either special or poetic. The meaning is widest in the four basic terms; it gradually narrows down from subsystem to subsystem.

Thematic groups as well as ideographic groups (in which words belonging to different parts of speech are linguistically and thematically related) are mostly studied diachronically on the principles of comparative linguistics.

A.A. Ufimtseva's monograph on the historical development of the words and denoting various aspects of the same notion, describes in great detail the semantic evolution of these words from the Old English period up to the present. The set in this case is defined by enumerating all its elements as well as by naming the notion lying at the basis of their meaning. This author calls her group lexica-semantic and offers this investigation as a way of revealing the system underlying the vocabulary. The difficulty, however, lies in the transition from this very limited subset of nouns to the whole of the vocabulary. The possibilities of transferring the results on the vocabulary system remain undefined.

The author succeeds in bringing forth different types of ties within a lexical system. Her comparative analysis of the semantic structures of the words very definitely shows particular and concrete manifestations of general features. Every feature of a notion (and consequently every component of meaning – I.A.) may serve simultaneously as uniting for equivalent lexical elements and differentiating with respect to other units. Thus all the semantic variants of the word *land* are united by the meaning of 'the future that characterizes extension in space'; with respect to all the other words the same feature is distinctive.

All the elements of lexica-semantic groups remain within limits of the same part of speech and the same lexica-grammatical group. When grammatical meaning is not taken into consideration, we obtain the so-called ideographic groups.

The ideographic subgroups are independent of classification into parts of speech. Words and expressions are here classed not according to their lexica-grammatical meaning but strictly according to their signification, i.e. to the system of logical notions. These subgroups may comprise nouns, verbs, adjectives and adverbs together, provided they refer to the same notion. Thus V.I. Agamdzhanova unites into one group such words as *light* n, *bright* a, *shine* v and other words connected with the notion of light as something permitting living beings to see the surrounding objects.

The approach resembles the much-discussed theory of semantic fields but is much more precise, because this author gives purely linguistic criteria according to which words belonging to the group may be determined. The equivalence of words in this case is reflected in their valency.

The list of used literature:

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