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CONCEPTUAL METAPHOR AND POLYSEMY

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Abstract. this article deals with the conceptual metaphor and polysemy. Author tries to prove polysemy, which, along with conceptual metaphor, is one of the main mental processes, becomes a catalyst for the development of meaning and the generation of new meanings, and the possibility of its appearance is due to the anthropocentrism of communication itself and human experience. In addition, author provides several notions of prominent linguists who contributed in the sphere of metaphor and polysemy.

Keywords: *lexical unit, lexico-semantic groups, cognitive categorization, cognitive-semantic analysis, prototypical meanings, schematicity, metaphorization.*

In traditional stylistics, a metaphor is considered as a transfer of the properties of one object to another with an increment of value. That is, some semantic characteristics of a word are distinguished and applied to a lexical unit of another group to focus its new quality due to the presence of common properties in both referents. For example, in the phrases *freight train and train of gears*, the word *train* objectifies different meanings that are united by a common semantic scheme of the concept train. The common semantic component for them remains the idea of organizing objects following each other, performing the same functions and united into one whole. General semantic characteristics are usually abstract and present in all examples of the use of this lexical unit and thereby ensure the integrity of its semantic structure. In numerous works on semantics, there are attempts to combine all variants of the use of this lexical unit into certain lexico-semantic groups. But practically all these attempts do not provide an adequate description of the correlation of the lexicon with the existing reality.

Therefore, the success of cognitive categorization used in cognitive-semantic analysis, which is based on the correlation of lexical groups with specific details of entities in the real world, is quite understandable. This categorization is a new kind of taxonomy, in which the lexicon is considered as grouping various clusters of lexical units around a common or prototypical meaning. The language structures formed in this way are called differently in various modern linguistic theories. This is the “image-scheme” of [1], “semantic superstructure” by L. Michaelis [2], “schematic form” by A. Culioli [3], lexico-conceptual model by R. Jackendoff [4] or simply “concept”, “domain”, “ideal conceptual models”, etc.

As a result of changes in the basic prototypical meanings under the influence of the context, words may have new meanings that will transfer it into another concept and into another more abstract structure. For example, the word *train* is the appearance of the meaning “set of some elements”. Thus, the cognitive-semantic structure becomes a form that generates other forms, as a kind of matrix that spreads into other concepts and generates new meanings.

Similarly, the adjective *square* demonstrates a different use of an identical scheme, where in combination *square meter* the referent has the shape of a square, that is, figures with the same length of all sides. And in the second use of *John is anything but square* in combination with an animate object (a person), it loses the designation of the geometry of the referent, but is transferred to the area of mental characteristics of a person, suggesting the presence of some angles, boundaries, resistance to change.

It is usually considered metaphorical to transfer from a more specific meaning, considered basic, to another, more abstract one, by choosing properties that are projected from the source concept into the concept goal. This is also observed in the example with the adjective *square*, and with the verb *go*, in which the temporal meaning clearly came from the meaning of movement. For example, *Time went by*.

The prototypical (basic, nuclear) form of a lexical unit never exists by itself. It is actualized in all contexts of its use, which objectify its specific interpretation or highlight some new facets of its meanings. All the meanings and their shades acquired in the process of communication are organized into a certain network.

Linguists distinguish different models of the organization of meanings among themselves and their connection with the schematic form [5]. In this paper, the position of R. Leneker is taken as a basis, who believed that the totality of different meanings of the word forms a radial category with some schematicity [6]. Moreover, one of the values in it is considered the best and most typical (i.e. prototypical) representative of all its characteristic properties. For example, the meaning of “contact” and “retention” in the verb *take* analyzed by us.

In metaphorical transference, we are dealing with different types of relationships between different meanings of one word [7].

A more general and fundamental cognitive mechanism - analogy - is involved in the process of metaphorization or schematic separation (abstraction). The analogy is based on similar features observed in different domains, and on the perception of abstract features that appear to be common.

Following J. Grady [8] they can be called actualizers of “obvious similarity” (perceived resemblance). With a metaphor, such a similarity is often not of a physical nature, the sentence is *He is a lion* does not indicate at all that he looks like a lion. Rather, it is based on encyclopedic knowledge about this animal, so we can assume that such a description implies spiritual qualities: courage, courage, courage, strength.

Metaphors based on physical similarity are called figurative (image metaphor). For example, *my wife <...> whose **waist** is an **hourglass***. Figurative metaphors have also been studied in detail within the framework of the theory of conceptual metaphors [9]. However, the focus of this theory was simple everyday speech describing people's relationships. For example,

- 1) *We 're at a crossroads.*
- 2) *This relationship is a dead-end street.*
- 3) *Our marriage is on the rocks* [10].

The most amazing thing is that there is nothing grandiloquent in such a way of expressing thoughts. Moreover, for the most part, such meta-odds are not built according to the formula A is B, although they cannot be called literal, because relationships cannot literally “be at a crossroads”.

J. Lakoff and M. Johnson noticed that the system of metaphors reflects the system of thinking. For example, units of any domain cannot be used to describe relationships. In English, the domain (concept) “Journey” is mainly used for this. The relationship between two domains (concepts) makes such metaphors conceptual: the target domain and the source domain by which the target domain is described. The authors of the theory also made the assumption that conceptual metaphors are based on the nature of our daily interaction with the world, in other words, our experience. For example, in language, an increase in quantity is usually described by an upward movement: *The price of shares is going **up***. This is due to the fact that when the height increases, the quantity also increases (the volume of liquid in the glass, the height of the pile of apples and their number, etc.).

The theory of conceptual metaphors has become widespread in cognitive linguistics, cognitive psychology and anthropology. Metaphor in this theory is understood as a cognitive mechanism in which one concept (according to R. Langacker's terminology [6] is partially projected onto another. At the same time, the second concept is interpreted partly due to the first one. Both concepts belong to different subordinate domains [9].

With metaphorical projection, a huge number of signs and assumptions are transferred from the concept source to the concept goal. One of the most common metaphorical

projections is: understanding is seeing. For example,

- 1) I now **see** the point you were trying to make.
- 2) His theory has **thrown light** on this problem.
- 3) The candidate's speech was not really **transparent** enough.

The "vision" sub-concept, which is part of the "body functions" concept, is projected onto the "understanding" concept, which is a sub-concept of the "mental functions" domain.

The main limitation on metaphorical projection is described by the "*Invariance Principle*", which is as follows: if both concepts, at least partially, have a similar image-schema structure, projection is possible. J. Lakoff argued that projection is possible only in the same structures of the source concept: the path is projected onto the path, the source onto the source, etc. For example, "the level of change is the way" *John is **way ahead** of Bill in intelligence. John is **far** more intelligent than Bill.* The process of metaphorical projection should not destroy the structure of the image-scheme of the concept-goal. For example, in the projection *actions are transfers (She gave me a kick)*, the concept source contains information that the object belongs to the recipient. In fact, the "acquisition" did not happen, just the recipient will feel the effect of the action for some time. In such cases, the projection is blocked.

The main difference between the standard cognitive theory of metaphor and all others is the unidirectionality of its projection, namely: from the source to the goal, and not vice versa. For example, if we say (knowing about the existence of the metaphor *people are animals*) *their love nest has been discovered*, then in this sentence the distinctive feature of some animals (habitat) is projected onto people (the meeting place of lovers). However, none of the other aspects of the meaning of the concept "man" is affected and their properties are not transferred to animals. In parallel with this case, there are also an infinite number of examples of other metaphors in which the signs of people are transferred to animals, for example, *Lions are courageous*. In them, the moral qualities of people are projected onto the instincts of animals. Such cases cannot be considered two variants of the same metaphor, since the object of projection is different in each case [9]. In other words, in each of these examples there are different frames with their different characteristics and structures.

With metaphorical transfer, not only the mereological parameters of concepts are taken into account, but also the inferences of what has been said change due to the violated parameters. This property has opened up great prospects for scientific dictionaries, which often turn to metaphor as an opportunity to use well-known lexical units to describe and nominate new phenomena. For example, the term *black hole* is also based on a metaphor, it means "a cosmic object so massive that it absorbs rays of light <...> due to this, they have no color, and their "blackness" makes them invisible". The astronomical metaphor is based on the presence of common properties between "holes" and cosmic bodies, since both are containers into which something falls, and from which it is difficult to get out, Moreover, they are black. However, a "hole" in the layman's understanding implies emptiness, while a "black hole" is not a void, but a significant volume.

One of the most modern examples of the widespread use of metaphor is the basic idea of our life "the human brain is a computer". However, in this case, the analogy is excluded from this process, because at the initial stage machines were created as simulators of human mental processes. Recently, some scientists have begun to consider the brain as a computer, a thinking machine. This became the source of the identification of the two concepts. Largely due to the computer model, human thoughts began to be studied as an autonomous system based on the use of formal symbols and signs. Therefore, they tried to explain the thought process using the laws of logic and algebra, and everything that was not included in such a rational scheme (emotions, perception) was taken out of the scope of study. Linguistics is also no exception in this regard: for example, the followers of N. Chomsky use the words *deep*, *shallow*, and *surface* to name the levels of syntactic structure, and their form is represented in

the form of *trees*. In cognitive linguistics, *central* and *peripheral representatives* of the category are distinguished, the meanings of words are connected in chains, form networks of meanings with “family resemblance”. Such metaphors are used only for pedagogical purposes, and the conceptualization of metaphors is the essence of these theories.

From a linguistic point of view, the use of metaphors leads to significant systemic savings in language resources and adaptability of the language. However, there is also a significant drawback in this, since one lexical unit can refer to several referents or the old term can be applied to new realities and new concepts.

With all that has already been said, it should be remembered that the word is not equal to the concept, the word is a “trigger element of representation” (representation trigger), presenting special structural and functional characteristics and carrying a referential potential.

Remaining the basis of polysemy, conceptual metaphor receive the greatest opportunity for their appearance due to the anthropocentrism of communication itself and human experience. The study of their use and development on the material of the verb group of the English language shows the inextricable connection of these units with the frame structure and with various transformations within it.

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