

THE LANGUAGE SYSTEM AND ITS FUNCTIONING IN SPEECH

O SISTEMA DE LINGUAGEM E SEU FUNCIONAMENTO NA FALA

EL SISTEMA DEL LENGUAJE Y SU FUNCIONAMIENTO EN EL HABLA

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ABSTRACT: in the prevailing era, the problem of studying the semantics of a lexical unit faces the totality of the complex “thinking – language system – speech,” implicating the multi-segment team of scientists. Hence, the present article attempts to provide sufficient proof for the non-reflective nature of language and speech. The linguistic observation, descriptive method, comparison as a universal linguistic method are utilized to meet the aim of the study. It has been demonstrated that a linguistic form, which, as a rule, is described by the dictionary as one having many figurative metaphorical meanings, is construed as unambiguous in the language system. New meanings emerge, are arranged by the speaker and the listener in the communication process, in the frame of an utterance. Therefore, polysemy can be viewed not as a word phenomenon in the language system but as a phenomenon of an utterance in speech.

KEYWORDS: Language and speech. Meaning. Ambiguity. Cognitive linguistics.

RESUMO: *Na era dominante, o problema de estudar a semântica de uma unidade lexical enfrenta a totalidade do complexo “pensamento - sistema de linguagem - fala”, envolvendo a equipe multissegmentada de cientistas. Portanto, o presente artigo tenta fornecer provas suficientes para a natureza não reflexiva da linguagem e da fala. A observação linguística, o método descritivo, a comparação como método linguístico universal são utilizados para atender ao objetivo do estudo. Foi demonstrado que uma forma linguística, que, via de regra, é descrita pelo dicionário como tendo muitos significados metafóricos figurativos, é interpretada como*

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inequívoca no sistema de linguagem. Novos significados emergem, são arranjados pelo falante e pelo ouvinte no processo de comunicação, no quadro de um enunciado. Portanto, a polissemia pode ser vista não como um fenômeno de palavra no sistema de linguagem, mas como um fenômeno de um enunciado na fala.

PALAVRAS-CHAVE: *Linguagem e fala. Significado. Ambigüidade. Linguística cognitiva.*

RESUMEN: *En la era imperante, el problema de estudiar la semántica de una unidad léxica se enfrenta a la totalidad del complejo "pensamiento - sistema de lenguaje - habla", lo que implica al equipo de científicos de múltiples segmentos. Por lo tanto, el presente artículo intenta proporcionar pruebas suficientes de la naturaleza no reflexiva del lenguaje y el habla. La observación lingüística, el método descriptivo, la comparación como método lingüístico universal se utilizan para cumplir con el objetivo del estudio. Se ha demostrado que una forma lingüística, que, por regla general, el diccionario describe como una que tiene muchos significados metafóricos figurativos, se interpreta como inequívoca en el sistema del lenguaje. Surgen nuevos significados, son ordenados por el hablante y el oyente en el proceso de comunicación, en el marco de un enunciado. Por lo tanto, la polisemia puede verse no como un fenómeno de palabras en el sistema del lenguaje, sino como un fenómeno de un enunciado en el habla.*

PALABRAS CLAVE: *Lenguaje y habla. Significado. Ambigüedad. Lingüística cognitiva.*

Introduction

Historically, the study of language and speech was uneven: first of all, understandably, speech has been studied, i.e. what falls within immediate experience of researchers. It is meant that at the same time there is a study of the language identified in speech.

W. Humboldt's definition of language is as follows, "constant and uniform in the activity of the spirit, raising an articulated sound to the expression of a thought, taken in the totality of its connections and systematicity, and constitutes the form of language." "One should see in language not some material that can be surveyed in its totality or conveyed part by part, but an eternally generating mechanism in which the laws of generation are determined, but the volume and, to a certain extent, the method of generation, remain completely arbitrary" (Humboldt, 2001: 360).

In Russian linguistics, the terminological distinction between language and speech was outlined as early as the beginning of the 19th century. The treatment of these notions, for example, by F. I. Buslaev, despite the terminology characteristic of that time, has quite a contemporary edge. Language is defined as "the gift for speaking that makes man different from other animals; it is a social phenomenon being an organized whole with the full extent of the laws". The author considers a characteristic feature of this whole to be consistency, which is clearly revealed only in speech, which is what is spoken, "a series of connected sentences" (Buslaev,

1959: 21-22). If the distinction between language and speech in these statements is rather schematic, but presented, then neogrammarians, and inspired by them, many linguists of the subsequent time (I. A. Baudouin de Courtenay, A. A. Shakhmatov, etc.), denied the reality of common language, acknowledging only an individual language, “so many languages in the world, so many individuals” (Paul, 1960: 58). That is, in fact, language and speech are not differentiated and are reduced to linguistic competence.

Only some linguists of that time presented the ratio of language and speech dialectically. So, in A. A. Potebnya, the term “speech” has a special meaning. Speech is understood as a realized fragment of a language or a context sufficient for revealing the capabilities of the units used, necessary according to the arrangement of communication, which achieves a relatively accurate understanding of the speaker’s thought. Speech shows how language is realized as a common one for a given speaker; in their various speech formations, the reality of a “general” and “personal” language is in little doubt. A word, according to the author, exists when it is pronounced, “the real life of the word <...> occurs in speech” (Potebnya, 1959: 13, 42, 44). Note that the last statement is the most valuable and ultimately relevant for us, for it opposes various kinds of “linguistic self-containment” that take place in some modern studies.

However, the concept of F. de Saussure had the strongest influence on future linguists’ gaining insight into language, speech and speech activity. Language, in accordance with this concept, is a finished product, passively registered by the speaker, and speech is something individual, collateral, accidental, “an individual act of reason and will.” On the other hand, the author cannot completely divide between language and speech, therefore he has many propositions that envisage the unity of language and speech, “speech is necessary in order for a language to develop.” Indicating the interdependence of language and speech (“language is both a tool and a product of speech”), F. de Saussure hastens to clarify, “But all this does not prevent language and speech from being two completely different things <...> It would be absurd to consider language and speech from one viewing angle.” At the same time, speech is understood by the author in a broad sense: the concept of speech also comprehends inner speech, i.e. thinking with the help of linguistic means, carried out “inwardly” (Saussure, 1998: 53).

Hence, vocabulary units, morphological and syntactic norms turn out to be a language, “the main capital of linguistic material”, which everyone uses in speech. Speech accounts for those phenomena of the text that will be at our disposal when we subtract all the traditional elements from the text and, therefore, those belonging to language; the resulting remainder which the speaker is responsible for contains, according to A. Gardiner, the facts of speech (Gardiner, 1965: 15, 17).

In Russian linguistics, the reaction to the concept of F. de Saussure was the works by a number of linguists, in particular, by L. V. Shcherba, V. A. Zvegintsev, Y. S. Maslov, etc. Thus, in similar vein his opinion is stated by V. A. Zvegintsev who defines speech as a means of communication, while language, “although it takes an obligatory part in the activity of communication,” by its purpose is not a means of communication. “Its main purpose belongs to a different area – the discretization of semantic content, which creates the preconditions for the activity of communication in all its links” (Zvegintsev, 2001: 217). Only speech, in the author’s opinion, can be a symbolic formation. At the same time, language, which really exists only in speech, is an abstraction (like a phoneme) and is a system of pure relations based on discreteness. Language in isolation does not have a “pronounced” character. Therefore, the author defines language as a system of pure relations and as a system of pure “meanings” (Zvegintsev, 2001: 218).

L.V. Shcherba points to a contradiction arising in the study of the language system: on the one hand, the language system is an individual manifestation (with account taken of the peculiarities relating to the organization of the language system of single individuals), and on the other hand, language is understood as something having social value. His concept, which presupposes the recognition of the trinity of “speech activity”, “linguistic system”, “linguistic material”, differs significantly from the triad proposed in the concept by F. de Saussure. This refers to recognizing the objectivity of the existence of “language system” in “linguistic material”, which is understood by L. V. Shcherba as the totality of everything that is said and understood in a certain concrete situation in a particular epoch in the life of a given social group or in individual linguistic systems. Speech activity, according to L. V. Shcherba, is also a linguistic material and is fraught with a change in the linguistic system. Moreover, the most general category is speech activity that includes the processes of speaking and understanding. While the linguistic system is something that is objectively set on a given linguistic material and that manifests itself in individual speech systems that emerge under the influence of this linguistic material (Shcherba, 1974: 26-27). One can only assume that “something that is objectively set on” is not something that functions independently of the linguistic personality. Obviously, this means that the system of linguistic representations has social value as something single and obligatory for all members of the linguistic community.

In our opinion, important in this concept is an indication of the interaction and interpenetration of the general and the individual. But, unfortunately, it is not possible to get a complete

picture of the author's views on this issue, since in his works L.V. Shcherba does not particularize the issues of the influence of linguistic material on the linguistic system and the relationship between the individual and the social in it.

Language is a system of elements at the disposal of a collective – the units of different tiers and a system of rules for the functioning of these units, or elements of expression and rules for their connection. Language and speech are differentiated in the same way as a rule of grammar and phrases in which the rule is used, or a word in the dictionary and multitudinous uses of the word in different texts. Speech is a form of language existence. Language functions and is directly given in speech. But in abstraction from speech, from speech acts and texts, any language is an abstract essence. Language and speech are psychic phenomena, that is, having a subjective form of existing. Language is fully represented and exists in speech, and the real sound matter of speech belongs to language. In our opinion, language and speech are undoubtedly interconnected, but not identical entities. Following I. K. Arkhipov, we understand the system of language as the norm of using the system of socially fixed signs (Arkhipov, 2001: 39). Speech is treated as an embodiment, realization of language, which manifests itself in speech. Language as a system is manifested in individual speech systems depending on the thesaurus of a linguistic personality.

The direction of statistical research of speech in order to determine the norm existing in specific languages can be assessed as more realistic, but one should not forget that the “quantitative” approach can be opposed, or rather, it can be supplemented with a “qualitative” analysis. From this point of view, the desired dichotomy can be based, for example, on the criteria of idiomaticity / non-idiomaticity, freedom / fixedness of a unit, reproducibility / non-reproducibility of syntagmata and units, their components, etc.

Methods

The main research methods in the field of contrasting the “language-speech” dichotomy are the methods such as linguistic observation, descriptive method, comparison as a universal linguistic method. Modeling of verbal and cogitative and sign processes is carried out on the basis of introspection as an intuitive reproduction of scenarios of verbal and cogitative activities of a sender and recipient of the message. Empirical invariant-component analysis of polysemantic English words is used as an illustration of the functioning of the lexical invariant, when,

on the basis of the semantic components selected in each meaning, a lexical invariant is formulated, including the core basic semantic components that lie in any of the configurations. based on all meanings of the word.

Hypothesis

Non-reflectivity inherent in the “language-speech” dichotomy is due to the functioning of the unambiguous content core (lexical invariant) of a polysemantic word at the level of the language system, on the one hand, and the actualization of meanings at the level of speech as a result of comparing the content core with actual speech and language contexts, on the other hand. The figurative meanings fixed by dictionaries, as a rule, reflect not the language level of the content, but the level of speech. Lexical polysemy is not a linguistic (systemic) but a speech (text) phenomenon.

Language and speech, of course, are interconnected, but not identical phenomena, each of which occupies its niche in human consciousness. In our opinion, the language system is by nature of verbalized concepts that are as given, but can only be derived from the processes of speaking and understanding. It has a generally accepted objectively existing part, common to all or most of the native speakers (otherwise, the language would cease to be a natural means for the linguistic community) and mechanisms of derivation. Language as a system manifests itself in individual speech systems depending on a particular linguistic personality. At a particular time, the language system has a finite set of units, and speech is variable in combinations, although this variation, for the most part, is not infinite. The speaker is guided in language communication by learned stereotypes that form a functioning language environment for them. That is, it is speech manifestations where the language system functions. Speech context is a language in action, and speech is a language in its use.

The hypothesis is suggested that the use of a lexical invariant as the content core of the word allows in the process of communication to carry out an effective search for and embed metaphorical meanings in the context of utterances. Lexical invariant acts as a general cognitive model of perception and understanding of the world.

Main Body

It would make sense further to give arguments in favor of identification of the phenomena of language and speech. So, according to A. A. Lomteva, language and speech are not

different phenomena but are “different sides of one phenomenon.” The difference between these phenomena is the difference between the generally accepted, fixed in the usage and the non-conventional, accidental, non-widespread. The author believes that “overcoming the view of language and speech as different phenomena is achieved by promoting the category of essence and its manifestation as the opposition of language and speech (Lomtev, 1976: 54-59).

Such views become possible due to the fact that the definition of the language system as “common, found in speech activity” is, according to the observations of V. M. Pavlov, in scientific use (Pavlov, 1968: 37-39, 52), “provokes” the formation of ideas about the reflective nature of units of language and speech. In this connection, language can be considered as fully represented and existing in speech, and speech is a “superlanguage remainder”.

Often, even if linguists consider language and speech as independent phenomena, they are viewed only as different “communicative states”. For example, language can be identified with knowledge of language, mastery of it, the ability to perceive and reflect the external and internal world of an individual in the linguistic form.

However, G. Guillaume spoke of the need of contrasting the system of language with the forms of its realization in speech way back in 1944. He considered it important “before any consideration of contextual meaning of any form <...> to restore the system, of which it is an integral part, and where it takes its meaning, - the meaning that already exists in thought (although we cannot immediately realize it, for we do not have direct access to these deep operations) and preceding any contextual meaning that is recognized in speech” (Guillaume, 1992: 84).

As you know, generative grammar which demonstrated “prototypes of future sentences” enunciated the nonreflecting nature of the relationship between deep and surface structures. So, J. Lyons identifies the structure underlying the sentence with language and refers the statements to speech (Lyons, 1978: 68). In this case, the units that fill the syntactic structures are extracted from the dictionary entries of the lexicon, i.e. become words. The principle that the deep structure of the sentence characteristic of language is embodied in the surface structures of speech began to be used by linguists as evidence of the discrepancy between language and speech.

Taking into consideration the solution to the problem of relationships within the “language-speech” dichotomy, one can turn to another important aspect of this problem – rendering and perception of content at the level of language and speech.

In the course of semiotics, language is considered to be a code that can be compared with other codes for a variety of reasons, for example, depending on what communication channel is used to transfer signals, what form these signals have, what kind of messages can be

encoded, etc. e. It is generally accepted that in the process of communication, *a signal* is transmitted *from a sender to a recipient* (or a group of receivers) via a communication *channel*. This signal has a certain *shape* and conveys a certain *meaning* (or *message*). The connection between the form of a signal and its meaning is established with the help of what in semiotics commonly referred to as a code (in the large sense of the word). The message is encoded by the sender and decoded by the recipient (Lyons, 2004: 25).

In the theories of speech communication, according to the traditional concept, the form of a sign is associated with a container of meaning, a material means of transporting it from point A to point B. Moreover, the material form of each unit of language is a bearer of some content in the literal sense, i.e. ... transposes a certain “finished” meaning from the speaker to the listener. Cf. “Meaning is a certain set of data (information) correlated with given objects and phenomena outside of linguistic reality, which is transmitted through the sound envelope of the word” (Mednikova, 1974: 269); “In human language, the signifier “envelops” the signified as the owner of all its properties (for example, the acoustic image of the words *бежать* / to run, *опасность* / danger, *территория* / territory is a concretion of a single idea of a certain phenomenon ...)” (Boykova, 2002: 25); “Of the changes that a thought formed and expressed through language undergoes, important is the fact that a pronounced idea ceases to be the property of its creator, but becomes a common property, begins living on its own. This circumstance makes the capitalization of human thought and its history possible” (Grechko, 2003: 12).

Such statements stem from the oblivion of W. Humboldt’s thesis that the process of speech cannot be compared with a simple transfer of material. In the process of communication, the listener, just like the speaker, “must renew it (the meaning of the statement – S. P.) by means of their inwardness, and everything that they perceive is reduced only to a stimulus that evokes identical phenomena” (Humboldt, 2001: 77-78).

As U. Maturana rightly notes, each of the speakers of a language acts exclusively within the framework of their cognitive area. The function of language is to orient an individual in their cognitive area, regardless of the cognitive area of the orienting one. That is, in the process of communication, no transfer of information or thought through language occurs, for the very listener creates information, lowering uncertainty through interactions in their own communication area. The speaker believes that “as if their listener is identical to them, and therefore the cognitive area of the latter is identical to their own cognitive area (which never happens) and is sincerely surprised when this or that “misunderstanding” is experienced” (Maturana, 1995: 119, 125).

Meaning as a unity of images of form and content is formed in the mind of the speaker, and then in the mind of the listener as a unity of images of the form of the word and content. This unity is formed by the speaker in accordance with the intention of an utterance. Since the content is ideal and not beyond consciousness, the intended meaning does not enter the objective world in the form of prepared knowledge “attached” to the material form. The form is perceived by the listener and, in their mind, is associated, like the mind of the sender of a message, with the invariant of its content. Then, on this basis, the listener outputs the actual meaning of the LSV in accordance with the speech context built by the sender of the message. Consequently, the speaker does not have in the literal sense physical feasibility to convey the content associated with them with the help of linguistic means, i.e. the meaning that they associate in their consciousness with a given form. Important for this approach is the view that the meanings of words do not “emerge” but are created by an individual (Arkhipov, 2004: 78-79).

Meaning is a fact of consciousness. It is closed in consciousness and, so to speak, indwells the head. When communicating meanings, strictly speaking, they are not delivered: signs cannot be considered the carriers of meanings in the sense that meanings are not contained in them, do not form part of the material body of the sign. Signs do not carry and do not deliver meanings (these are metaphors) from one person to another, but induce identical or similar meanings, excite similar information processes in two minds.

In the linguistics of the recent past, one can find insightful observations in this connection, “I can ascribe any predicate to an object if only any other individual who could enter into a dialogue with me would also ascribe the same predicate to the same object” (Habermas, 1973: 220). Such quotes, unfortunately, were the passing references only, and there were no research and conclusions focused on this issue.

Thus, the interaction of the “language-speech” dichotomy can be demonstrated by means of the example of any polysemous word. Let us illustrate the English words *knee* and *cheek*. An approximation to what we call a language system will be their invariant meanings, including the dominant and most significant components that connect the structures of these words (Pesina, Latushkina, 2015; Karamalak, Pesina, 2017). So, the first meaning of the polysemant *knee* sounds like “middle joint of the leg, where legs bends”, a lexical invariant: “a projection with an angular bent”. The lexical invariant underlies the following metaphors: knee of a supporting (metal) structure, knee of a tree branch / timber, knee of a furniture leg, knee of a stair handrail, knee of a curve, etc.

For the word *cheek* a nominative-nonderivative meaning will be “one of the two soft side parts of the face below the eyes”, and a lexical invariant – “one of the two corresponding

lateral parts of anything”. The lexical invariant underlies the following metaphors: as cheek of a door/gate, cheek of a hammer, cheek of a mast, cheek of a vise, cheek of a foundry flask. Each of the meanings of the word structure is the realization of invariant basic components (Pesina, 2020; Pesina, Yusupova, 2015).

A construct such as lexical invariant (its abstract part) is the result of comprehending all the meanings of a lexeme at a new, higher level of abstraction. Such invariant features solve important communication problems, providing a fast track to the desired meaning in the lexicon, effective speech interaction. In the process of communication it is often sufficient to have a common understanding of the situational context through the use of a dominant semantic feature to which the fastest neural connections lead (Solonchak, Pesina 2015; Pesina, 2021).

Summary

So, in linguistics there is a confrontation of opinions regarding what is really “comprised in language” and “how it works” in speech. Some scholars believe that language is a “self-sufficient”, “self-organizing” system, often viewed as a counterpart of speech. The opposite line of linguistic thought focuses on the asymmetry of the content of concepts in the system of language and at the level of speech. Proponents of this approach try to determine which real structures of knowledge used in speech are opposed to the corresponding potential structures at the language level. In our opinion, the language system is verbalized concepts that are not given to us directly but can be determined only from the processes of speech. It includes a generally accepted objectively existing part that is common to all or most of the native speakers, and the mechanisms of derivation.

Unlike speech, the units of the level of language system are always determined by a limited number of features in comparison with the actualized unit at the level of speech. At the same time, language is an open, constantly replenishing and renewing system that does not put a constraint upon a person and does not reduce the process of communication to the tautological use of a finite set of units. Moreover, each communicant acts exclusively within the frame of their cognitive area: the meanings of words do not “arise” but are created by them.

Cognitive understanding of the phenomenon of polysemy suggests that a polysemous word has a single systemic meaning: at the level of the language system the word is represented by its content core (Pesina, Pulekha, Tandon, 2019; Pesina, Solonchak, 2015). At the speech level, the polysemant is represented by contextual realizations, i.e. its meaning. Thus, the relationship between language and speech is non-reflective. Since the level of the language system

is represented by the core of content, it is further appropriate to answer the question of what the core of content in our understanding is.

Conflict of Interests

The authors confirm that the data do not have any conflict of interests.

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