

REFLEXO DAS PALAVRAS IMAGEM NA LINGUAGEM COMO REALIDADE SECUNDÁRIA

REFLEJO DE PALABRAS IMAGEN EN EL LENGUAJE COMO REALIDAD SECUNDARIA

REFLECTION OF IMAGE WORDS IN LANGUAGE AS A SECONDARY REALITY

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RESUMO: *A busca por uma interpretação consistente da estrutura semântica de uma palavra no nível de invariância impulsionou o imaginário para as fileiras das questões mais prementes. O papel determina as propriedades e características específicas das imagens. Uma análise de componentes invariantes de cada um dos significados figurativos e comparando-os ainda mais com a semântica do primeiro significado não derivativo nominativo são utilizados para atender ao objetivo do estudo. Mostra-se que as palavras que denotam objetos da natureza, artefatos e zoomorfismos, ou seja, um léxico específico que designa as realidades mais próximas da vida das pessoas, são mais descritivas. A generalização e a abstração de uma imagem se desenvolvem à medida que uma palavra é aplicada a novos significados metafóricos figurativos no processo de compreensão da estrutura semântica de uma palavra polissemântica.*

PALAVRAS-CHAVE: *Linguística cognitiva, Imagem, Imaginação, Significado, Metáfora, Invariante lexical.*

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RESUMEN: *La búsqueda de una interpretación consistente de la estructura semántica de una palabra al nivel de la invariancia ha propulsado a la imaginería al rango de las cuestiones más apremiantes. El papel determina las propiedades y características específicas de las imágenes. Se utiliza un análisis de componentes invariantes de cada uno de los significados figurativos y su comparación adicional con la semántica del primer significado nominativo no derivado para alcanzar el objetivo del estudio. Se muestra que las palabras que denotan objetos de la naturaleza, artefactos y zoomorfismos, es decir, un léxico específico que designa las realidades más cercanas a la vida de las personas, son más descriptivas. La generalización y abstracción de una imagen se desarrolla a medida que se aplica una palabra a nuevos significados metafóricos figurativos en el proceso de comprensión de la estructura semántica de una palabra polisémica.*

PALABRAS CLAVE: *Lingüística cognitiva, Imagen, Imaginación, Significado, Metáfora, Invariante léxica.*

ABSTRACT : The search for a consistent interpretation of the semantic structure of a word at the level of invariance has propelled imagery into the ranks of the most pressing issues. The paper determines the specific properties and characteristics of images. An invariant-component analysis of each of the figurative meanings and comparing them further with the semantics of the first nominative non-derivative meaning are utilized to meet the aim of the study. It is shown that the words denoting objects of nature, artifacts, zoomorphisms, that is, a specific lexicon that designates the realities that are closest to the life of people, are more descriptive. Generalization and abstractness of an image develop as a word is applied to new figurative metaphorical meanings in the process of comprehending the semantic structure of a polysemantic word.

KEYWORDS: Cognitive linguistics, Image, Imagination, Meaning, Metaphor, Lexical invariant.

Introduction

The concept of “image” is so complex and multifaceted that any of its complete definitions will be definitely affected by excessive generalization and abstractness. The ability to visualize is a basic feature of our thinking, and visual perception is the most important source of information about the world around us (Zhao et al., 2022). In addition, the system of images as the most significant component of an individual world view is the most ancient and universal form of reflection of reality by human consciousness (Bunyatova, 2018; Kiseleva & Trofimova, 2017).

Image thinking is representative in the sense that it is formed on the basis of sensory perception. It performs both reflective and heuristic functions, holding various visual signals spontaneously or purposefully coming from the senses and endowing an image with sensory content. Image presentation is aimed at visual clarity and at integrity and concretization. Visual expression is understood as a concrete-sensory appearance of an object, fixed in the minds of native speakers, eye or ear minded representation (Górska, 2019).

An image can have a syncretic character, combining different sensually perceived aspects of an object into a holistic image. Cognitive linguistics differentiates between linguistic and stylistic imagery, assuming that under stylistic approach, not only a logical but also an aesthetic form of thinking is realized in language (Hurtienne, 2017).

An image is more connected with the objects of reality than with the categories of abstract meanings, therefore one of the problems discussed in the article concerns the availability of images for linguistic thinking. Imagery can be viewed as the ability of a word to evoke in each individual consciousness a certain sensory response, visual, auditory, tactile, motor and other ideas about what is designated. Imagery is the most optimal and economical means of access and actualization of a meaning in the process of communication (Mácha, 2019).

It is our belief that in the process of communication, it is the generalized images and the minimum number of identifying semantic components that are often quite sufficient for effective interaction in the process of decoding speech segments. At the same time, more detailed, clear images stand behind concrete meanings, in contrast to general abstract meanings whose images are holistic and less clearly defined.

Our study makes it possible to state the fact that generalization and abstractness of an image develops as the word is applied to new objects of a certain order. It is, first of all, about the comprehension of figurative metaphorical meanings of polysemous words. The basic mechanism of metaphor is the anthropomorphism of image sensitivity when abstract and objective phenomena are comprehended in the image and semblance of how the human body functions. At the same time, the vector of analogy goes in two directions – anthropomorphic per se and the opposite when objects and phenomena that are in the zone of the direct existential space of a person receive anthropomorphic comprehension (including personification, animism, animatism).

Some scholars understand anthropomorphism extremely broadly, that is, when non-objective, abstract phenomena are comprehended in the image and semblance of the objective world and are embodied in figurative vocabulary in a concrete sensual form. This is due to the desire to simplify abstractions and the desire to interact with objects and phenomena of the real world that are most comprehensible for human perception. If desired, one can imagine inflation as an inflating balloon. In the Russian language there are expressions such as “inflated reputation” or “inflated authority” that can also find a figurative response (Evans et al., 2015; Pesina et al., 2021).

The more unexpected and brighter the image is, the more it helps understanding, memorizing, it has a strongly convincing beginning. Expressive comparisons draw attention to details, increasing their clarity (for example, speech built according to the canons of post truth, when emotionality shows great consideration for the level of persuasiveness) (Pesina & Latushkina, 2015).

The most imaginative are words standing for objects of nature (tree, mountain, orange), artifacts (house, book, table), zoomorphisms (pig, cat, dog). They are behind a specific vocabulary, nominating realities, closest to the life of people. And nevertheless, imagining these objects in our mind’s eye, as a rule, a picture that represents a very generalized sample of the corresponding class of objects appears.

At the other pole of the functioning of figurative responses there are sketches and obscure gestalts or schemes behind the generalized meanings of polysemants, if such are formed over time in the process of active actualization of meanings. A marker that such common meanings have formed is the appearance of dictionary meanings such as something resembling head (nose, mouth, etc.) in shape or position (function). Such meanings are, as a rule, applied to as many objects as possible. Such words gravitate towards eurysemy. We call them polysemants with open nomination.

Methods

Carrying out an invariant-component analysis of each of the figurative meanings and comparing them further with the semantics of the first nominative non-derivative meaning, we determine the most dominant frequency semantic features behind each metaphor. The next step is the formulation of a lexical invariant that includes kernel semantic components, which, in any of the configurations, underlie all meanings of the word. For example, the bunch of dominant features “*something top, important, beginning or any extreme of the object*” covers the semantics of the metaphorical meanings of the polysemant *head*, and the basic features “*a connection (often narrow) that spans or connects parts of something and serves as a support*” stand for the semantics of figurative metaphorical meanings of the word *bridge*.

Thus, the lexical invariant includes the most significant integral and differential semantic components and is formed at the level of the language system through numerous contextual realizations of meanings (in particular, metaphorical ones). It is derived from the internal “intuitive contemplation” via the corresponding brain algorithms innate and characteristic only for humans, conveying the essence and outlining the boundaries of the semantic structure of the word. At the linguistic level, we are dealing with a bunch or cluster of semantic components, and at the psycholinguistic level, we are dealing with a model of the functioning of words in the lexicon. Moreover, such an invariant model is thought to have an innate character since this is due to the habit of generalizing word semantics (along with categorization and conceptualization).

Introspection as a part of self-reflection is a method that will make for hypothetical conclusions about image-bearing imprints in the mind. Both images and imaginations can be spontaneously formed in consciousness if they are relatively independent of the will of a person. Both are only models of real objects, taken in their entirety, they may not coincide with it exactly. Imaginations can arise in consciousness only if objects are removed from the field of direct perception.

Results and discussion

Imagery is a less energy-intensive process compared to linguistic thinking. So, if in the process of communication someone mentions an animal, for example, a dog, then we do not comprehend it as a set of semantic features (domestic mammal, covered with wool, guards the house, loves to chew on bones, etc.) ... Most likely, an image of a prototypical dog will flash through the one's mind (perhaps not even an image, but a contour) since the concepts of animals are given, first of all, figuratively. If communication requires it, these images can be "fleshed out", but, perhaps, an imprint that flitted across one's mind or just an emerging state will be sufficient to understand the context of what has been said (Pesina et al., 2019).

The primary image, as a direct reflection of the real world, is the basis in relation to the secondary image, which is characterized by cohesiveness. The latter loses an amount of detail inherent in the primary image, it is schematized and typified. When schematizing, abstract, non-objective phenomena are comprehended in the image and likeness of the objective world and are embodied in figurative vocabulary in a specific sensory form. And yet, understanding images, schemes, an observed life situation, etc. depends on the knowledge of the meanings of corresponding visually perceived elements, and not on the knowledge of a language, therefore, such visual images are understood in all languages.

Secondary images become, as it were, portraits of entire classes of objects, created on the basis of "portraits" of individuals. Generalization lies in the fact that the image of a class has a more flexible range of distinctive features of the class. As it was said above, the image representation is aimed at the integrity and concretization, "Arising at the transition of reflection from the singular to the general, from the concrete to the abstract, from the final to the changeable, the image of a class connects a concept with the reality and operationally provides two functions of a concept – to realize the conceptualization of things and to draw the identity of a class" (Janda, 2015).

As an ideal entity, the image of a class occupies an intermediate position between the concrete concepts of the singular and the abstract concepts of the general. Both primary and secondary images can emerge in human mind as a result of the inclusion of conjectured features.

Images can be blurred or faded, they are often "difficult to identify" (for example, images of a city, a village in general). This fact is also associated with the ability of our association cortex to conjecture missing information. If we do not know the very object but we know its linguistic use, we take it into our imaginative world, including it in the composition of suitable situations prompted by linguistic memory, even if the object itself in the composition of such a situation is seen as nothing more than a vague hint. For example, a city dweller is not able to discern grasslike sedge or juniper as specific objects, but when I come across expressions such as the thicket of coastal sedge, fragrant juniper, I recognize them as familiar and known to me (Gouteraux, 2017).

“Obscure” images carry us, in a way, into the sphere of the unconscious.

The next problem concerns the accessibility of images for linguistic thinking. According to K. Jung, in images, imaginations in linguistic thinking, human consciousness finds the only possible support that allows it to intellectually master its own deep content potential (Evans et al., 2015). Obviously, thoughts that do not need the help of language flit extremely quickly. In the time pressure of communication, for example, with an unexpected question, a person can change his/her mind in an instant. In any case, language does not take away the ability to think quickly, but even enhances it.

In the formation of a linguistic image, visualization plays a decisive role. Reproducibility is inherent in the visual image: pictures in the imagination can be re-created. The image is distinguished by variable focus, that is, it can have a varying degree of prominence - from very bright to elusive. One can note the multiplicity of the image response. So, the words *field*, *forest* or *mountains* can evoke not one, but a whole gallery of imaginative pictures, depending on various circumstances, including, first of all, the speech context. Thanks to such a property of our brain as neuroplasticity, the images ingrained in consciousness, having strong neural connections, are of the highest priority. The concept of plasticity of images in psycholinguistics is associated with their capacity for reincarnation (Solonchak & Pesina, 2015).

In general, it can be stated that as a result of decoding the images underlying the figurative meanings of a polysemantic word, the addressee receives new information about the real world, which contributes to the generation of new meanings. Since a metaphorical meaning has the highest figurativeness of all figurative meanings, it is of interest to consider metaphor as a mechanism that allows to combine ideas about dissimilar objects with the obligatory preservation of semantic duality and a figurative element (Pan, 2019).

A number of definitions are used to denote this phenomenon: “coincident vision of two pictures”, “two-fold denotation”, “double vision of the phenomenon”, “double perception”, “semantic duality”. These points of view reflect the objective existence of two planes in the semantics of a figurative word – connected with nominative meaning and with associative imagination. In this case, an indication of a concept occurs through another concept or an idea of an object, or a transfer / isolation of a common feature. The content of an image can be regarded as a combination of two imaginations into one visual representation based on associative thinking. In “double vision” of an object, the signified is associated with another object by the similarity of a real or attributed (imaginary) feature.

The whole point of the formation of meaning and the functioning of a figurative meaning lies in the constant background presence of the idea of an original object since the purpose of the “game” with the reader, and especially with the reader of poetic works, when using figurative

meanings, is precisely to demonstrate how far and why the author of the transfer has moved away from the “primary source”. The use of figurative meanings has no other purpose. Indeed, if the image of the original object were completely dim, then each figurative meaning would be a homonym and would be beyond the polysemy.

In everyday life, it is enough to have an idea of things and phenomena of the real world in order to understand each other. For example, descriptions of the spatial localization of electrons in the form of an “electron cloud” or descriptions of the structure of atoms as “miniature” solar systems facilitate our understanding but are not of great importance for deeper insight into theoretical concepts.

These theses correlate with the distinction between two main levels of thinking – judgement and reason. Judgement is ordinary, everyday, “worldly” thinking or what is often called common sense. Reason is scientific thinking, the highest level of rational cognition, which, first of all, is characterized by the creative operation of abstractions and the conscious study of their own nature (self-reflection).

From the point of view of dialectical logic, “everyday” and “worldly” concepts are not concepts in the proper sense of the word, they are, rather, a general idea of things. They represent a transitional step from complexes and pseudo-concepts to true concepts, for “there are no concepts for things that have not been the subject of scientific study” (the word *table* has a common, well-known meaning, but it is very difficult to define the “concept of a table”) (Cavazzana & Bolognesi, 2020) . So, there is no concept in a logical or philosophical sense for the meanings of *голова цветка / the head of a flower* or *голова сахара / a sugar loaf*. This can be explained by the fact that these meanings are based on features that are not significant either from the point of view of logic or from the positions of other sciences. The verbal form *голова* does not correlate with a concept, but with a meaning or representation. It is also easy to formulate the concept of the word *стол / table*, highlighting the most essential distinctive semes in its semantics, but this will, of course, not be scientific, but “everyday” or “naïve” concept, that is, the idea of a table.

Conclusion

So, our experience of perceiving and comprehending the world around us unconsciously crystallizes into representations automatically, due to the existence of appropriate mental and linguistic mechanisms for ordering information. This is due to the fact that conceptual and linguistic activities are carried out within the framework of self-organization and self-regulation as the leading linguistic function. This means that a person owes his/her ideas not to his/her own accumulated information about the surrounding reality, but assimilates them, thanks to the corresponding mechanisms inherent in consciousness.

The formation of sensory responses in the neurobiological sense is closely related to the organization of neural patterns, on the basis of which images emerge, which are not passive reflections of the brain's work. When different people observe an object, they form comparable images, but this does not mean that the image seen by a person is a picture of the object. From the point of view of the theory of corporeality, the visible image is based on changes that occur in the organism, body and brain as the physical structure of a certain object interacts with our body: a certain ensemble of sensory detectors is distributed throughout our body and helps to design neural patterns that map the essential interactions of an organism with an object according to a variety of parameters.

Speaking of figurative meanings, it should be noted that figurativeness never disappears. Most dictionary compilers feel this when they put the figurative meaning in one entry with the first meaning. In this regard, metaphors are a serious intellectual work load. This is almost the only way to grasp and meaningfully define objects of a high degree of abstraction. Metaphor is a key that unlocks the meanings of images, helps understand and master figurative thinking, which is the basis of any kind of activity. In the real process of thinking, images, representations and meanings are given in a certain unity. The objects we meet often are parts of sets and categories, the boundaries of which we do not know. In such cases, we use common sense that guides our behavior under normal circumstances.

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