SYSTEMICITY OF THE LEXICAL LAYER OF THE LANGUAGE

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Summary

The article contains an overview of approaches to the study of the concept of «field» as a marker of the immanent systemic nature of language, to the typology of field formations. In modern linguistic studies, there is a distinct tendency to study vocabulary as a complete system, which is determined in the works of T. Kosmeda, H. Mezhzherina, L. Lysychenko, O. Selivanova, O. Malenko, V. Tarasova and other famous scientists. The main proof of the systemic nature of vocabulary is the creation of special microstructures, or semantic subsystems, organized on the basis of paradigmatic, syntagmatic and epidigmatic relations. With this in mind, researchers offer various options for combining vocabulary: lexical-semantic groups, semantic fields, thematic groups, thematic classes, etc. The projection of such a position onto the lexical layer of the language actualizes the concept of lexical-semantic fields, which are united by a content commonality and reflect the conceptual, substantive or functional closeness of the indicated phenomena. In the article, we focus our attention precisely on the concept of the lexical-semantic field, since it most vividly reflects the hierarchical structure of fragments of the lexical-semantic system and expresses the relationship of traditional language categories, preserving the natural systematicity of the language phenomenon.

Key words: lexical-semantic field, lexical-semantic group, thematic group, semantic field, language system.

1. Introduction

In modern linguistic studies, there is a different tendency to study vocabulary as a complete system, which is united in the works of T. Kosmeda, H. Mezhzherina, L. Lysychenko, O. Selivanova, O. Malenko, V. Tarasova and other famous scientists. They note that vocabulary directly or indirectly reflects life, activity, material and spiritual culture. However, there is still no unified approach to the study of the vocabulary of the language at the level of revealing its systemic nature. This motivates the relevance of our research. The purpose of the publication is to review approaches to the study of the concept of "field" as a marker of the immanent systemic nature of language, to the typology of field formations.

2. Evidence of the existence of the lexical system

Vocabulary is dynamic: it reacts sharply to changes in society; it is a living organism in which certain processes are constantly taking place: the appearance of new words, the transition of words to the passive layer, the change of some meanings of lexemes, etc., which makes the study of its content and structural characteristics as difficult as possible. The structure of the vocabulary is considered in two aspects: through the systematic relations between lexical units

and through the stratification of the vocabulary, the study of which is facilitated by the methods of structural linguistics, the use of which has expanded the horizons and possibilities of analysis of this complex and extremely powerful language level.

Some researchers deny the existence of the lexical system as such, since it cannot be compared with the phonetic and grammatical systems, where there is a defined corpus of units. The lexical system is built on an extremely extensive array of millions of units. The lexical system is built on an extremely extensive array of millions of units. These units are not protected from social, cultural and material influences, therefore they undergo sudden and unsystematic changes, however, this does not affect the comprehensive systematicity of the language phenomenon. H. Mezhzherina, supporting and summarizing the above, believes that "the thesis "language is a system of systems" can rightly be attributed to the category of linguistic axioms" *(Mezhzherina, 2002: 114)*. The researcher focuses on the fact that "the first attempts to identify the general principles of the organization of language vocabulary date back to the 18th century, when V. Humboldt`s teaching on the "internal form of language" manifested a systemic and holistic view of language, and D. Didro i Zh. L. d`Alamber, when defining the main tasks of lexicology, noted the systematic nature of the organization of words in the language" *(Mezhzherina, 2002: 115)*.

The concept of system is often extrapolated to language. A system is a complete object consisting of elements that are in mutual relations. An important property of the language system is the heterogeneity and ability of its elements to undergo combinatorial transformations. In this regard, O. Selivanova notes that the language system is "a hierarchical organization of language competence abstracted from real speech activity, consisting of invariant units, structured on the basis of syntagmatic, paradigmatic and epidigmatic connections between these elements at all language levels" *(Selivanova, 2010: 659)*.

The above gives reason to believe that the vocabulary of any language is a complex system, the study of which can take place in a wide range of directions and approaches, among which two diametrically opposed ones dominate: logical (when studying the semantics of a language, scientists take into account concepts) and linguistic (word). Among the representatives of the first approach, it is worth mentioning Y. Trir, P. Rozhe, Kh. Kasares, the second – T. Kosmeda, L. Lysychenko and other scientists, on whose position we rely in our research.

Lexica is a complex and integral system, which makes it impossible to study its entire range. Therefore, scientists consider the most appropriate step-by-step analysis of individual groups, components of the lexical system, in which the field approach can be most useful, since it is within its limits that the external and internal connections of the analyzed lexical material are taken into account, which, therefore, will not violate the natural architecture of the lexicon of a certain language as such.

O. Potebnia also wrote in his early works that the laws of grouping words and their meanings must be studied. The linguist also believed that with the development of language and thinking, it is important to study the semantic series of words in close connection with the history of the people. Continuing the ideas of the great scientist, modern scientists emphasize the fact that it is necessary to clearly distinguish the actual lexical system from the lexical-semantic one. We understand the lexical system as an organized set of interconnected elements, characterized by the plurality of elements, their organization and interconnectedness.

So, the lexical-semantic system is a synthesis, the result of a complex interaction of words in their individual meanings, presented at the nominative-classification level (paradigmatics) and the level of lexical conjugation (syntagmatics).

3. The word is the basis of the lexical-semantic system of the language

As O. Selivanova notes, paradigmatics is "a type of connections in the language system that are established on the basis of variability, similarity, oppositeness, derivation, inclusion, subcategorization of linguistic units and exclude their simultaneous use in the same position" *(Selivanova, 2010: 531)*. The researcher defines syntagmatics as "an end-to-end type of connections in the language system that determines the combinatory ability of units of any level, that is, the potential possibility of their linear combination in the speech stream" *(Selivanova, 2010: 650)*. There is also a third type of connections in the language system – epidigmatics. This type of connections "is based on the associativeness and imagery of human thinking and mediates the processes of metaphorization" *(Selivanova, 2010: 152)*.

The presence of paradigmatic, syntagmatic and epidigmatic relationships emphasizes the systematicity of vocabulary as much as possible. Paradigmatic relations are related words whose meanings have a common component. Words enter into syntagmatic relations on the basis of logical contiguity of concepts and lexical contiguity. Epidigmatic relations are characteristic of the meanings of a polysemantic word.

Traditionally, three main directions of studying vocabulary as a system are distinguished: the study of lexical composition by subject groups; historical and semasiological study of the lexical-semantic group of the same or different languages; study of the semantic side of the language by conceptual and semantic fields.

So, the word is the basis of the lexical-semantic system of any language. This system is an organized set, the elements of which are connected by certain stable connections. The main features of the lexical system as a set of means of linguistic expression are: distribution of words by lexical-grammatical and semantic classes; interaction of elements of word formation; features of the morpheme composition of words; ratio of unambiguous and official words, concrete and abstract, motivated and unmotivated vocabulary; the level of openness and closedness of the main lexical microsystems; the role and semantic valence of the compared vocabularies in the respective microsystems.

4. Views of researchers on the formation and functioning of the lexical system

The boundary unit of the lexical system – the word – is multidimensional, and its significance in this system is determined not only by linguistic factors, but also by extralinguistic factors (the correlation of the word with the subject line and the sphere of functioning), which makes it extremely difficult to study their meaning spectrum by methods established in linguistics. However, the structural approach to the study of the vocabulary of the language has expanded the possibilities of researchers, as it is based on the study of separate, but united by a common semantic core, groups of lexical units. The process of generalization is at the heart of language development. As a result of this process, words are grouped according to their semantic similarity. Linguistic practice still does not accept a single name for the associations of such words: they are classified as lexical-semantic systems, semantic classes, semantic microstructures, lexical microsystems, lexical-semantic paradigms, archilexemes. However, most often they are called lexical-semantic groups.

As S. Bronskykh rightly points out, a lexical-semantic group is "a group of words that are characterized by closer semantic connections. Within the lexical-semantic group, even more closely related semantic associations (lexical-semantic categories) are distinguished – synonyms, antonyms, hyponyms" *(Bronskykh, 2012: 10)*.

The term lexical-semantic group is often used to denote verbal semantic fields. By this term, he understands a lexical association with homogeneous meanings, which is a specific phenomenon of the language, determined by the course of its historical development. This is a set of words that have close and identical meanings with different shades, differential features (synonyms). According to this approach, the main linguistic criterion for distinguishing a lexical-semantic group is the presence of semantic connections between words according to lexical meanings. The semantic fields include synonyms, antonyms, other groups of words connected by the commonality of some semantic relations. Two main ways of existence of connections between lexical-semantic groups of words are distinguished: 1) through the interaction of the entire range of meanings of one group with the range of other groups; 2) due to heterogeneous semantic connections of one member of the group with other words that are not part of this group. The basis for distinguishing a lexical-semantic group under this approach is the semantic unity of certain units – lexemes, its units must belong to one part of the language. Therefore, the definition of a lexical-semantic group as a combination of words that belong to the same part of the language and are semantically related to each other in terms of lexical meanings becomes classic.

The criterion for distinguishing a lexical-semantic group is often called the presence in one or another period of free semantic connections between words along the lines of their lexical meanings. The primary criterion for distinguishing such a unit is the word as the main dictionary unit in its multiple and complex semantic connections with other dictionary units.

According to O. Malenko, a lexical-semantic group is one of the micro-units of the lexical system, which has a systemic status, is limited to the words of one part of the language and acts as a union of logically and thematically connected constituents *(Malenko, 1996: 5)*. In addition, O. Malenko emphasizes the presence of paradigmatic series with genus-species privative types of relations within the lexical-semantic group; the relative similarity of the meanings of the members of one lexical-semantic group; common characteristics of the semantic structure; presence of nuclear and peripheral parts; commonality of distributive potentials *(Malenko, 1996)*.

In this aspect, we agree with the position of H. Mezhzherina, who notes that a lexical-semantic group is a "structural-semantic unit of language, which is characterized by the semantic connection of words and their meanings, the categorical community of lexical units, the hierarchical order of their organization, relative autonomy of units, continuity of the semantic space" *(Mezhzherina, 2002: 115)*. Taking into account the above, a lexical-semantic group is understood as a set of units of the same part of speech. The basis for distinguishing this unit is the word in its various complex semantic connections with other lexical units. Elements of lexical-semantic groups are united and connected by intra-linguistic relations.

Some scientists call the main structural unit of the vocabulary a semantic field, which denotes a wider group of words, contains words from different parts of the language, is characterized by the presence of a common differential feature in the corresponding elements. The identifier of the semantic field is outside the field and, more often than not, acts as a phrase denoting a generic concept in relation to the members of the field. The elements of the semantic field are combined by a community of non-linguistic connections and relationships.

The field is also defined as a set of linguistic, mainly lexical, units that are united by a common content (sometimes by a common formal indicator) and reflect the conceptual, substantive, or functional similarity of the indicated phenomena. A field is a grouping of linguistic elements with common properties that belong to different levels of language. If the presence of a common differential feature in certain elements and attraction are considered to be a sign of a field, then defined functionally invariant groups are defined as fields in the vocabulary.

The elements of these groups are characterized not only by the presence of a common (invariant) feature, but also by a communicative and structural function.

An important feature that distinguishes the concepts of a semantic field and a lexical-semantic group is the intra-language and extra-language conditionality of connections between the elements of one or another microsystem. The elements of the semantic field are united by a community of non-linguistic connections; elements of the lexical-semantic group are connected by intra-linguistic relations.

The semantic field contains in its composition words of the same order – either with a concrete (names of birds) or with an abstract (field of intelligence) meaning. The lexical-semantic group, on the contrary, can consist of: words denoting material objects (land); from words denoting ideal objects (verbs of motion); from words with abstract and concrete meaning.

Since the lexical-semantic group is separated from the semantic field on the basis of some polysemous word, this polysomous word is the dominant group and is necessarily part of it. Other members of the group are with the dominant in terms of synonymy. The identifier of the semantic field is always outside the field and, as a rule, is a phrase that denotes a generic concept relative to all other members of the field.

In this regard, V. Tarasova rightly notes that the semantic field is a system of words formed historically in the process of the communicative activity of a collective of speakers, united by an abstract integral seme or a community of formal indicators, to indicate a certain fragment of the picture of the world *(Tarasova, 2010)*.

One of the lexical microsystems is a thematic group. The scientist noted that words that are part of the thematic fields are united by the same typical situation or one topic. However, a common nuclear scheme is not mandatory for them.

The most important feature that distinguishes a thematic group is the extra-ordinary conditioning of connections between its elements. In contrast to a semantic field ordered by a set of verbal signs, a thematic group is a collection of material or ideal denotations (or referents) marked by verbal signs. Another important feature of the thematic group called the diversity of connections between its members and the absence of such in general. The form of arrangement of the denotations that make up the thematic group is enumeration. At the same time, various connections and inclusions, enumerations, etc. can be observed between certain elements of the set (genus-species, part-whole, etc.). The name of the thematic group is, as a rule, a word (and not an artificial entity) – education, transport, etc.

It is possible to classify vocabulary by thematic groups for different purposes, therefore, in each such case, the composition of the group will change regardless of the lexical-semantic connections of the words. Thematic groups of words can often overlap with industry vocabulary. Within one thematic group there are smaller, but closely related lexical-semantic groups.

We record the presence of a thematic class – a formal analogue of the semantic field. The impossibility of clear and unambiguous grouping of vocabulary into thematic classes should not be considered a disadvantage. Thematic classes (and, therefore, semantic fields) do not divide the dictionary into classes, but combine words according to separate linguistic meanings. This is true for all lexical units regardless of their categorical affiliation. In some cases, the boundaries of the thematic class are distinguished intuitively.

An important lexical-semantic microsystem of language is the lexical-semantic field. This term is preferred when the subject of research is the semantic organization of the lexical system. Grouping when analyzing lexemes according to different paradigmatic groups, it is more logical to consider lexical-semantic and thematic groups as constituent parts of the lexical-semantic field.

One of the main problems of studying the semantic level of language is the problem of modeling the content plan and any semantic subsystems (microstructures). The semantic model should have the ability to isolate the values included in the subsystem; establish semantic relations between these values.

5. Conclusions

Therefore, one of the urgent tasks of modern linguistic science is the study of systemic relations in vocabulary. The main proof of the systematicity of vocabulary is the existence in its composition of special microstructures or semantic subsystems organized on the basis of paradigmatic, syntagmatic and epidigmatic relations. As a result of the analysis of scientific sources, we come to the conclusion that there is no single approach to the study of the vocabulary of the language at the level of findings of its systemic nature. There are different options for combining vocabulary and, accordingly, different views of researchers on the formation and functioning of the lexical system (lexical-semantic fields, lexical-semantic groups, semantic fields, thematic groups, thematic classes), and therefore, the issue of this issue remains relevant. In our opinion, the concept of "lexical-semantic field" fully reflects the hierarchical structure of fragments of the lexical-semantic system and expresses the relationship of traditional language categories (synonymy, antonymy), preserving the natural systematicity of the language phenomenon.

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