

SEMANTIC PECULARITIES OF THE NOUNS WITH ABSTRACT MEANING

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e-mail: oksanakozyr27@gmail.com, orcid.org/0000-0003-1540-3614**Summary**

The aim of this work is to interpret words with abstract meaning with the help of Cambridge Advanced Learner's Dictionary & Thesaurus. Foreign linguists have made a significant contribution to ideographic lexicography. The essence of ideography is to determine the range of ideas (concepts, archetypes) and verbal means of their reproduction. Ideographic dictionaries are extremely interesting for scholars because they are convenient for solving a variety of linguistic problems. Linguists identify different ways of interpreting the meaning of foreign vocabulary. Abstract nouns are one of the lexical elements of the English language system. The alphabetical principle of arrangement of tokens is convenient and universal, which does not allow to demonstrate the system of vocabulary. However, lexicographers of explanatory alphabet dictionaries can reproduce certain lexical connections through remarks and references. Methods of linguistic research: general scientific (analysis), methods of theoretical research (from abstract to concrete). "... Taking the Cherneyko's classification of the nouns as the basis of the research we elicit the most common hyperonyms to generalise the meaning of the definitions.

Keywords: hyperonym, classification, dictionary, definition, category, lexicography.

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1. Introduction

The dictionary is the result of long and painstaking work which preserves the knowledge and experience of many generations. Working on such a publication requires in-depth knowledge of the lexicographer. It is an important universal collection of a large amount of information about words: prescriptions about the part of the language to which they belong, their origin, usage rules, emphasis, examples and so on. It is a large source of information where the vocabulary is arranged according to a specific system: in alphabetical order, thematic, nesting and so on. In this paper we will consider abstract vocabulary and the means of its presentation in the dictionary. Such a dictionary is a collection in which the interpretation of the meaning of a word or other lexical items is given by means of the same language as the explanatory token. To denote the ideographic classification of vocabulary, linguists use the term thematic principle, which indicates a significant difference between alphabetical and semantic order, but it does not reveal its essence. Only in the case of thematic organization of vocabulary, when the researcher groups words and their meanings by topics and does not aim to reproduce the primary classification by ideas (concepts, concepts, archetypes), the term thematic should be used. The specificity of ideographic and thematic dictionaries is based on this feature (*Snizhko, 1995: 31*).

Yu. M. Karaulov (*Karaulov, 1956*) and I.M. Hetman (*Hetman, 1993*) paid considerable attention to the definition of the scientific field that studies the conceptual structure of language and ways of expressing it in ideographic dictionaries. It should be noted that Yu. M. Karaulov raised the issue of the importance of ideography for the study of the peculiarities of different languages and the world in general.

Means of defining vocabulary are the subject of many linguistic works. Foreign linguists have made a significant contribution to ideographic lexicography, the results of their work are a large number of dictionaries by P. Roger (*Roger, 1978*), P. Boissier (*Boisser, 1862*), H. Casares (*Casares, 1951*), F. Dornseif (*Dornseif*) and others.

2. Main body

Linguists identify different ways of interpreting the meaning of foreign vocabulary. We turn to those on which D.I. Arbatsky focuses:

- 1) synonymous;
- 2) enumerative;
- 3) descriptive;
- 4) negative;
- 5) interpretation of the word through the expression of a wider class and distinctive features

Abstract nouns are one of the lexical elements of the English language system. According to the classification of L.O. Cherneiko there is an opportunity to divide the nouns into groups with the specific meaning such as:

- Mental state;
- Situations;
- Relationships;
- Ethical and aesthetic concepts;
- Nouns-categories of the surrounding world;
- Hyperonyms

Classification proposed by L.O. Cherneyko (*Cherneiko, 1997:6*), is based on the experience of studying abstract vocabulary in native and foreign linguistics which, in our opinion, is the most capacious, and therefore was chosen as the main one.

3. Interpretation of abstract nouns

1. For analysis and more detailed consideration of the classification of abstract vocabulary, the following English-English dictionary has been chosen: "Cambridge Advanced Learner's Dictionary & Thesaurus" (<https://dictionary.cambridge.org/dictionary/english/>). The total number of selected words reaches at least 15 lexical units, which we propose to consider below.

Since the basis is the typification of L.O. Cherneyko (*Cherneiko, 1997:6*), first we consider the noun which denotes to the mental state of man is "hysteria".

extreme fear, excitement, anger, etc which cannot be controlled (<https://dictionary.cambridge.org/dictionary/english/>).

As we can see, the Cambridge Advanced Learner's Dictionary & Thesaurus (<https://dictionary.cambridge.org/dictionary/english/>) interprets the word in simple words making it easy to read.

Another example for the analysis of this category of abstract vocabulary is the word "satisfaction":

the pleasant feeling you have when you get something that you wanted or do something that you wanted to do (<https://dictionary.cambridge.org/dictionary/english/>)

and one more example with the same meaning is the word "pleasure":

a feeling of happiness or enjoyment (<https://dictionary.cambridge.org/dictionary/english/>).

Depending on the context of the definition we can easily figure the meaning out. Both of the

definitions are based on the word “*feeling*”. In turn, the first definition is supported by an adjective “*pleasant*”, specifying the emotional color of the mental state of person. The attributive clause of the interpretation provides the additional information making the meaning clear.

An abstract token to denote the noun of a situation is “*lockdown*” with the supportive definition of the Cambridge Advanced Learner’s Dictionary & Thesaurus (<https://dictionary.cambridge.org/dictionary/english/>):

a period of time in which people are not allowed to leave their homes or travel freely, because of a dangerous disease (<https://dictionary.cambridge.org/dictionary/english/>).

As we see, the basis of the definition is the word “*period*”, which allows understanding its the temporal situation.

The next example of this category with an abstract meaning is the noun “*furlough*” with the following interpretation:

a period of time that a soldier, worker, or prisoner is allowed to be absent, especially to return temporarily to their own home (<https://dictionary.cambridge.org/dictionary/english/>).

Rather simple definition is understandable on condition that consists of simple descriptive words. The phrase “*period of time*” prompts to consider the meaning of the noun referring to the situations.

The example of the following classification, namely relationships is the noun “*censure*” with the following definition:

strong criticism or disapproval (<https://dictionary.cambridge.org/dictionary/english/>).

At first sight the interpretation is rather simple having in the basis two nouns like “*criticism*” and “*disapproval*”. The adjective “*strong*” reinforces the meaning of the word being interpreted.

The noun “*deprecation*” is defined like something that cannot be accepted or allowed to do. The Cambridge Advanced Learner’s Dictionary & Thesaurus (<https://dictionary.cambridge.org/dictionary/english/>) interprets the abstract unit as follows:

the action of not approving of something or saying that you do not approve of something.

The basis is the noun “*action*” making the definition clear to understand that it concerns the behaviour between people.

An example of the relationship between people can also be the token “*conflict*”:

an active disagreement between people with opposing opinions or principles (<https://dictionary.cambridge.org/dictionary/english/>). The noun “*disagreement*” forms the basis of the definition referring to the behaviour or describes the attitude to specific things or actions explaining personal principles and viewpoints.

The word “*justice*” was used to consider the category of ethical concepts. The interpretation is as follows:

behaviour or treatment that is fair and morally correct (<https://dictionary.cambridge.org/dictionary/english/>). At first sight we can admit for sure the definition refers to the relationships with the noun “*behaviour*” in the basis. But the adjective “*fair*” and an adverb “*morally*” add more peculiarities meaning ethical concepts even to the behavior of a person.

The next example to the same category is the noun “*dignity*”:

calm and serious behaviour that makes people respect you. The dictionary defines it like peculiarities in person’s behaviour as well demanding the preferable attitude (<https://dictionary.cambridge.org/dictionary/english/>).

To consider the category of ethical concepts, the word “*discrimination*” was taken:

treating a person or particular group of people differently, especially in a worse way from the way in which you treat other people, because of their skin colour, sex, sexuality, etc (<https://dictionary.cambridge.org/dictionary/english/>). The dictionary - “Cambridge Advanced Learner’s Dictionary & Thesaurus” (<https://dictionary.cambridge.org/dictionary/english/>),

presents a detailed and complete interpretation of the proposed noun. In this example, the criteria of skin color, gender and sexual orientation are mentioned.

We suggest one more word to the same category like “*morality*” with the following definition:

ideas and beliefs about what is right or wrong (<https://dictionary.cambridge.org/dictionary/english/>).

The dictionary interprets it like something good or bad that we trust. The definition is completely understandable with its simple descriptive words.

To analyze the nouns of the category of aesthetic concepts, we took the word “*beauty*”:
the quality of being pleasing, especially to look at, or someone or something that gives great pleasure, especially when you look at it (<https://dictionary.cambridge.org/dictionary/english/>).

Interpretation makes it possible to understand the meaning of the noun - a pleasant feeling from contemplation of something that looks attractive. The dictionary mentions the pleasure of direct eye contact with a person or contemplation of the subject.

For a more detailed consideration of the category of aesthetic concepts, we took another token “*harmony*”:

a pleasant musical sound made by different notes being played or sung at the same time (<https://dictionary.cambridge.org/dictionary/english/>).

In this definition, the word “*harmony*” means a pleasant musical sound, which is the result of simultaneous harmonious reproduction of different notes.

When considering the nouns-categories of the surrounding world, we turned to the word “*environment*” which is illustrated with the following interpretation:

the conditions that you live or work in and the way that they influence how you feel or how effectively you can work (<https://dictionary.cambridge.org/dictionary/english/>). In this case the noun “*environment*” means the perceptive abilities of the surrounding world influencing on our work or feelings.

Another example that was taken to analyze the suggested category is the word «*society*»:

a large group of people who live together in an organized way, making decisions about how to do things and sharing the work that needs to be done. All the people in a country, or in several similar countries, can be referred to as a society (<https://dictionary.cambridge.org/dictionary/english/>).

As we can see, the interpretation of the token we took from the first dictionary is quite detailed.

4. Hyperonym in the basis

In the article we rely on the typological paradigm of tokens with abstract meaning, proposed by the researcher L.O. Cherneyko. The choice is due to the fact that the author makes a gradual gradation from the tokens with a more severe degree of abstraction to those endowed with “abstract concreteness.” According to her, “the class of abstract nouns traditionally combines the names of mental states (emotional and mental), (fear, happiness, doubt), names of situations (betrayal, quarantine), names of relationships (conflict, friendship), names of ethical and aesthetic concepts (duty, conscience, beauty), names-categories of the natural (natural and social) world (matter, society), hyperonyms (reservoir, plant)” (*Cherneyko, 1997*).

As stated in the directory “Russian language. Encyclopedia”: “... Hyperonym subordinates words whose meaning: “...Absorbs”, the latter all together are subject to the common word” (*Russian language. Encyclopedia, 1997:81*).

Having analyzed a number of abstract nouns on the basis of the corresponding definitions we can allocate the hyperonyms which most precisely define the relation of this or that word.

The chosen token to define the hyperonym is "*feeling*":

the fact of feeling something physical (<https://dictionary.cambridge.org/dictionary/english/>).

The definition states that a feeling is something a person can physically feel on themselves or while touching a certain object.

A hyperonym can also be the word "*time*":

the part of existence that is measured in minutes, days, years, etc., or this process considered as a whole (<https://dictionary.cambridge.org/dictionary/english/>)

In the definition we took from Cambridge Advanced Learner's Dictionary & Thesaurus (<https://dictionary.cambridge.org/dictionary/english/>) time is measured in minutes, days, years, and so on, over a period of time.

One more hyperonym denoting with the definitions of abstract nouns is the noun "*quality*":

a characteristic or feature of someone or something (<https://dictionary.cambridge.org/dictionary/english/>).

The hyperonym is defined as a characteristic or feature.

The following highlighted hyperonyms are "*condition*" with such a definition:

the particular state that something or someone is in meaning the state or a place (<https://dictionary.cambridge.org/dictionary/english/>).

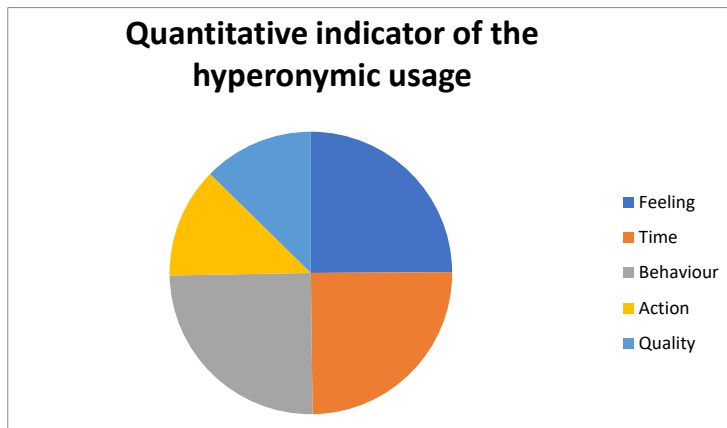
The next example of the hyperonymic word is the noun "*action*" interpreted as:

the process of doing something, especially when dealing with a problem or difficulty. Such a definition interprets the hyperonym like a process of doing something (<https://dictionary.cambridge.org/dictionary/english/>).

One more example of the hyperonym is the noun "*behaviour*" defined as:

the way that someone or something behaves in a particular situation (<https://dictionary.cambridge.org/dictionary/english/>).

The dictionary Cambridge Advanced Learner's Dictionary & Thesaurus (<https://dictionary.cambridge.org/dictionary/english/>) interprets as the way of doing something.



5. Conclusions

Considering the classification of abstract nouns and analyzing examples, we can conclude that the dictionary presents a detailed explanation of the word being interpreted. At the

heart of each definition is a generalizing word that explains, specifies the meaning through hyperonymic connections. Quantitative analysis makes it possible to analyze the frequency of use of hyperonyms for interpretation of the corresponding abstract noun.

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